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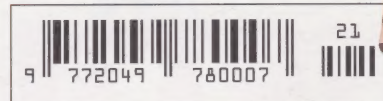
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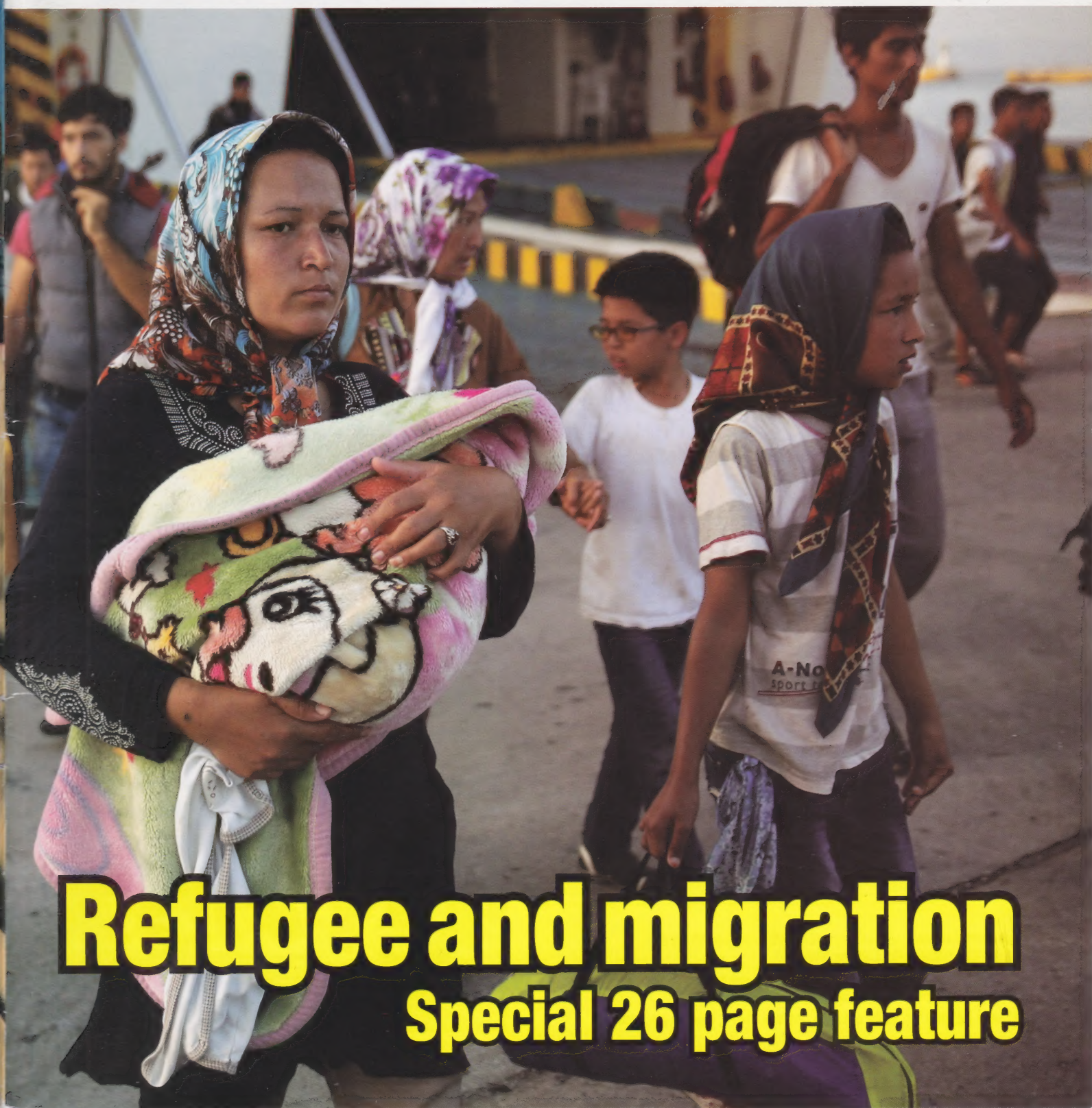
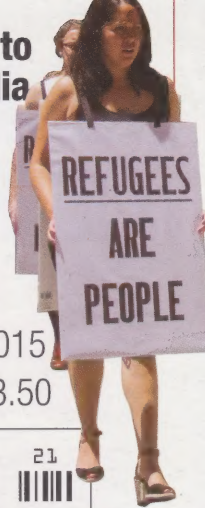
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antidote to hate  
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September-October 2015

Issue no. 21 Price £3.50



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# HOPE not hate

An anti-fascist and  
anti-racist publication

September-October 2015

Issue no. 21

ISSN 2049-7806

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Cover photo: An Afghan refugee holds  
a baby following her arrival onboard the  
Eleftherios Venizelos passenger ship.

HOPE not hate is a bi-monthly  
publication providing information on  
hate groups and community initiatives  
to combat them.

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## Nick Lowles

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## Immigration: a toxic issue that needs handling with care

ONE SMALL BODY washed up on a Turkish beach seemed to have changed everything. After ruling out accepting any more refugees, Prime Minister David Cameron was forced into a U-turn and announced that the UK would take in 20,000 Syrian refugees, albeit over five years and then only from camps in countries neighbouring Syria.

The public demanded action and even *The Sun* set up a fund to bring 3,500 Syrian orphans to this country but amidst all the outpouring of sympathy and kindness let us not kid ourselves that much has really changed.

As *HOPE not hate* goes to press, a week after Alan Kurdi's tiny body was washed up, the media is already changing. Fatigue is setting in and the normally hostile right-wing press is returning to form.

And, it is doubtful whether public opinion has really shifted at all. Polling taken at the height of the media coverage of Alan Kurdi's death showed that only 23% of people believed the UK should take 10,000 refugees or more, whilst 25% were opposed to us taking any at all.

The remaining half showed some sympathy but either wanted lower numbers coming in or preferred to give assistance to refugees abroad.

It is also highly likely that the mood will sour as time goes by. The enormity of the refugee crisis in the Middle East and Africa will cause many to become increasingly cautious and even hostile.

Governments across Europe will close borders and the public will demand action is taken to stop people entering their respective countries.

Then, there is the recently

announced Immigration Bill that will criminalise tens of thousands of undocumented people living in private rented accommodation, imprison landlords and reduce the already pitiful benefits asylum seekers and migrants are entitled to.

To help push the bill through the Government and right-wing press will only increase their demonisation of those coming in from abroad.

Finally, the likely EU referendum next September will see the Government demand stricter rules on access to benefits. At the same time, UKIP knows full well that fear of immigration is one of the main motivators for those wanting out. Indeed, support for leaving the EU is above 50% for the first time in many years precisely because of the refugee crisis.

HOPE not hate will work with partners to support the refugees and migrants fleeing persecution, war and poverty. We will also increase our work to build solidarity with those already in Britain, just as we will oppose the Immigration Bill.

But we will do so under no illusions about the difficulties we face. We must also be careful to avoid talking to ourselves, preaching to the converted and producing material and holding events that make us feel good but alters little.

We must be realistic, address the public from where it is – as opposed to where we would wish it to be – and seek to win over some of the anxious 50% by understanding, appreciating and addressing their very real concerns.

Immigration and migration are political hot potatoes and we will have to work intelligently if we are to have any chance of shifting the debate. ●



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Guardian journalist Ben Doherty worries that the rhetoric and actions of European countries are increasingly echoing Australia



### RAMITA NAVAI

Filmmaker Ramita Navai tracks down Ali Baba, a notorious people smuggler who preys on desperate migrants in Europe's border badland



### BENJAMIN WARD

Benjamin Ward, deputy director of Human Rights Watch (Europe and Central Asia division) reflects on Europe's response to boat migration

### HOPE not hate challenges the politics of hate and organised intolerance within society.

Initially established to counter the electoral rise of the BNP, HOPE not hate mobilises communities by providing a positive alternative to the politics of hate. Since it was founded in 2004, HOPE not hate has over 165,000 online supporters and over 150,000 followers on Facebook.

We are not aligned to any political party and will work with everyone wherever possible.

HOPE not hate comprises HOPE not hate Ltd and our charitable wing, HOPE not hate Educational Ltd.

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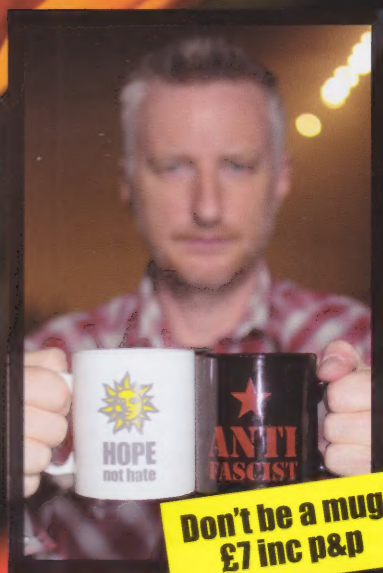


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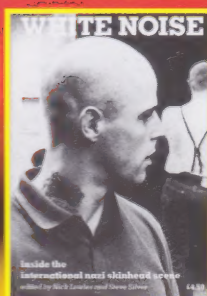


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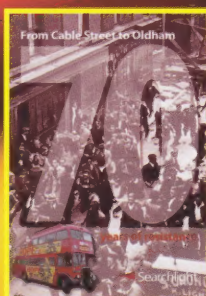
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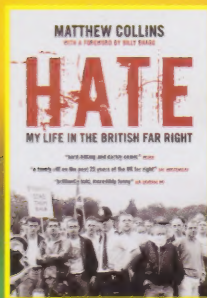
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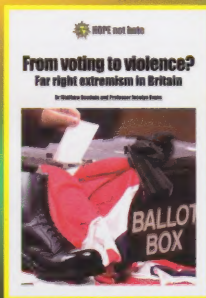
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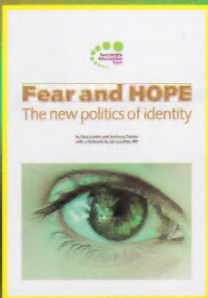
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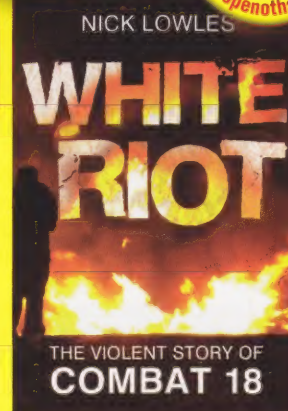
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British computer hacker Junaid Hussain

## UK hacker terrorist killed in drone attack

A CONVICTED British computer hacker who fought for Islamic State (IS) has been killed in a US air strike in Syria. Junaid Hussain, *aka* Abu Hussain, al-Britani considered to be a high-ranking member of ISIS, was highly placed on the wanted list of IS leaders and is thought to have been involved with plots in the US, the UK and mainland Europe.

Hussain played an active role in radicalising potential recruits to join ISIS and carry out possible terrorist attacks. In June, sections of the UK media linked him to a plot to detonate a pressure cooker bomb at an Armed Forces Day parade in London.

The Birmingham-born terrorist, who left the UK for Syria in 2013, posted

messages on social media supporting the gunmen who launched the attack at the "Draw Muhammad" event in Garland, Texas.

Hussain was part of the "Cyber Caliphate" and helped Islamic State obtain passwords enabling the organisation to gain access to the US Central Command's social media accounts. In 2012, he was part of the hacking group "Team Poison" that accessed Tony Blair's address book, allowing publication of its details online. He was later convicted and jailed for six months. US officials say the drone strike that killed Hussain took place near the ISIS stronghold of Raqqa. Whitehall official described the terrorist's death as "significant".

## UKIP candidate calls for immigrants to be "gassed like badgers"



UKIP HAS been forced to suspend one of its by-election candidates after it was revealed he posted messages online calling for immigrants to be "gassed like badgers".

Bobby Douglas (pictured), who intended to fight the upcoming Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen by-election for UKIP, also described immigrants as "sponging, scrounging parasites" and labelled Muslim men as "paedophiles".

Douglas posted on Facebook last year: "Gas the bastards if they don't go. If it's good enough for badgers it's good enough for scum" as well as liking and sharing posts made by the racist English Defence League and the nazi English Volunteer Force and calling for a return of lynching and hanging.

A party spokesperson said: "UKIP has suspended Bobby Douglas as a candidate in the forthcoming by-election. "His name will still be on the ballot paper as a UKIP candidate due to the late change, but he will not be representing the party.

## PM: segregation responsible for rise in extremism

PM DAVID CAMERON has claimed that the rise of the far right and Islamic extremism in some of the UK's towns and cities is caused by segregation.

In a speech in Birmingham on extremism, Cameron stated that he thought places such as Bradford and Oldham were among "the most segregated parts of our country" and promised to ensure that people and families of all backgrounds and religions mix in our education system along with social housing.

Cameron said: "It's no coincidence that these are some of the places where community relations have historically been most tense, where poisonous far

right and Islamist extremists desperately try to stoke tension and foster division."

He also claimed that "segregation has actually increased or stayed deeply entrenched for decades. The education that our young people receive is actually even more segregated than the neighbourhoods they live in."

Cameron added: "There is a danger in some of our communities that you can go your whole life and have little to do with people from other faiths and backgrounds. So, when groups like ISIL seek to rally our young people to their poisonous cause, it can offer them a sense of belonging that they can lack here at home."

## Hate preachers face trial

HATE PREACHER Anjem Choudary (pictured) is to face trial next year charged with encouraging support for ISIS.

Choudary has been accused of inviting support for the banned terror group on social media between 29 June last year and 6 March this year, contrary to section 12 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

Choudary and one of his disciples, Mohammed Rahman, were arrested in August and were remanded in custody following an appearance at Westminster Magistrates Court. Rahman, *aka* Abu Baraa, stands charged

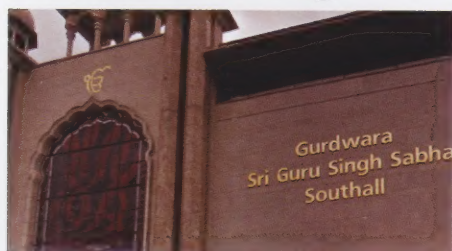
with the same offences as Choudary. The duo were bailed, however, on 4 September.

Choudary has protested his innocence, claiming that David Cameron, the police and the courts are actually guilty and not himself and that his arrest was a "political manoeuvre to silence Muslim voices". He is insisting he will defend himself in court. Both men have since appeared at the Old Bailey via video link from the high-security Belmarsh prison for their first crown court hearing.





## "Thugs" forcibly stop interfaith wedding



A GROUP of men forced their way into a London Sikh Gurdwara and managed to stop an inter-faith wedding from taking place. Police had to be called after the men, who were also Sikhs, forced their way into the Sri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara in Southall and began threatening and intimidating those involved with the marriage ceremony.

Sohan Singh Sumra, vice-president of the Gurdwara, said: "They were all thugs, none of them were recognised by any of the Sikh groups here... It was because it was a mixed marriage... they just came here to spoil it and intimidate us."

The Gurdwara is now planning to hire private security for future events. Mr Sumra said the men had called the Gurdwara the day before the wedding between a Sikh woman and her white, non-Sikh, fiancé. The Gurdwara contacted the families involved who took the decision to go ahead regardless of the threats. However, they were forced to cancel due to the intimidation on the day.

Mr Sumra said that the vast majority of the Sikh community has no issue with inter-faith marriage. He said "I've been in this temple since 1994 and I've never seen this sort of thing. We will always listen to people's suggestions but there was no reasoning with them. It was a sad day."

Sadly, The Sikh Federation UK has refused to condemn the men's actions.

## Muslim youth praised in their fight against extremism



David Cameron speaks to students at a Birmingham school about ways that young Muslims can tackle extremism online

YOUNG MUSLIMS are helping The Metropolitan Police in a war against ISIS on social media.

Scotland Yard's leading counter-terrorism officer Commander Richard Walton has praised those involved and said that great ideas were emerging from the new Muslim Youth fora set up to combat online extremism.

Walton said: "We are sensing that Muslim youth wants to stand up to Islamic extremism. We believe they do and they are saying so. They are coming up with some great ideas." "They are," he said, "seeing stuff online, on Twitter, which is extremist. They are great kids who are used to social media and they look at it and say 'why don't you do this or why don't you do that?'"

"If you are talking about countering ISIS-inspired narrative of social media, the best people to counter that are going to be young people who are not radicalised and who are within the Muslim community and they are coming up with ideas for us."

The people involved in the project are working with imams, parents and disengaged members of the Muslim community with the aim of helping police improve their counter-extremism strategy.

Some are taking part in the development of new online messages to counter the appeal of the concept of the "jihadi bride", empowering women and girls to resist the poisonous ideas of extremists.

## United Patriots cancel Walsall protest after EDL 'flop' turnout

*Birmingham Mail*

AN ANTI-ISLAM demonstration in Walsall planned for next month has been cancelled.

A group called itself United Patriots (Walsall) were planning to stage the protest on October 3.

But a post on its Facebook site has now been removed.

The news comes weeks after an English Defence League march in the town led to nine arrests.

Labour councillor Aftab Nawaz is the chairman of 'We are Walsall', which organised a celebration of community to oppose the EDL march.

He said: "Police have confirmed that no protest is now planned for October 3rd.

"The protest was aimed to target the

Muslim community and what it called the 'Islamisation'.

"Walsall, like many towns in the Black Country, has been targeted by these far right groups in an effort to spread distrust, hate and cause conflict between our peaceful communities.

"In that, they have been unsuccessful and the numbers attending these events are getting smaller and smaller.

"We suspect that the decision to

cancel the October demo is because the organisers realized that so few people would turn up.

"According to the police, the recent EDL demonstration only managed to attract 160 people from across the country; whereas our event saw some 250 local people turning out to say no to their message of racism and hate and to make clear that the EDL and their like are not welcome."

- Home news is collated and updated on a daily basis at [www.hopenothate.org.uk/news/](http://www.hopenothate.org.uk/news/) scan the QR code to see the latest >>
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## BELGIUM | Belgians negative to immigrants

FROM WIM HAELESTMAN FOR AFF/VERZET – RÉSISTANCES, BRUSSELS.

ACCORDING TO a recent survey, a majority of Belgians thinks the country is receiving too many immigrants and that these newcomers have a negative impact on the country's development.

500 Belgian citizens were interviewed. 61% of respondents stated the number of immigrants is "far too high". This puts Belgium in fifth place after Turkey (91%), Italy, Russia and South Africa. In Germany, the European country hosting the

biggest groups of immigrants, 43% of all respondents shared this opinion.

A majority of Belgian respondents (52%) is convinced that finding a job is harder due to immigrants and 56 % estimate that the burden put on public services by immigrants, is too heavy. Barely 12% of the Belgians taking part in the poll think immigrants have a positive influence on the country's development, a figure that puts Belgium far below the average of 24%

for the 24 countries examined.

Ever since the federal government decided to create 2,500 new places in temporary centres for refugees and asylum-seekers, the (unsuccessful) Flemish branch of Pegida – dominated and led by members of the far right Vlaams Belang – has called for "firm action" and demanded that the government shuts the doors to new "unwanted foreigners". Their slogan: "The country is full".

## GERMANY | Racist attacks hit new high

FROM MICHAEL KLEIN IN LEIPZIG

WITH GERMANY agreeing to accept 800,000 refugees this year, racist clamour against their housing and care is mounting. In some cases, violent protests are being organised by nazi parties like the National Democratic Party (NPD) or Die Rechte, most notably in Heidenau where buses containing refugees were stoned and where attempts are going on to block provision of a refugee centre. The violence has drawn strong condemnations from the German authorities, including Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The new nazi outfit Der III Weg even ran an online digital map pinpointing hundreds of places where refugees have found shelter in recent months. The number of racist attacks on refugees and their homes rose to some 220 in 2014 and this year's number will be even higher. In the first six months alone, more than 200 incidents occurred throughout Germany.

These range from hostile demonstrations at refugee centres to arson attacks – in which several buildings have been destroyed – to shots being fired at a refugee centre in Böhlen near Leipzig. Few offenders are arrested. Amongst those who have been convicted so far are racists with no previously known connection to the organised far right.



## SPAIN | Supreme Court acquits nazis

FROM SANDRA CORTÈS FOR ANTIFEIXISTES.ORG IN MADRID

A PROSECUTION appeal against the acquittal of armed nazis arrested in 2005 has been dismissed by the Spanish Supreme Court as a result of illegal wiretapping carried by the Guardia Civil (GC) police.

The GC's investigation exposed the existence of a clandestine organization ready and willing to attack political enemies and revealed connections with some police officers. Coincidentally, weeks before the trial, the Guardia Civil destroyed – "by mistake" – weapons, including a grenade launcher and guns, seized from the nazi group that was known as the Anti-System Front (ASF).

The prosecution of the ASF was brought by left-wing parties and anti-fascist organisations, via Popular Action Against Impunity. These have now been ordered to pay court costs. Among the accused was the murderer of Guillem Agulló (a young anti-fascist killed in 1993), several soldiers and a former councillor for the far right España2000.

The ASF touted weapons through a website, organised concerts and staged other activities in the Valencia area and had international connections. Many of the accused had several previous convictions for various crimes.



Late Austrian nazi, Norbert Burger

## AUSTRIA | Far right terrorist dies

FROM MARTIN JORDAN IN VIENNA

FAR RIGHT ACTIVIST and convicted terrorist, Peter Kienesberger, died on 14 July 2015 in exile in Ebermannstadt, Germany. In 1961, Kienesberger became an activist of the South Tyrolean Liberation Committee (BAS), which aimed to achieve the South Tyrol's secession from Italy which annexed the province at the end of WWI. He participated in numerous bombings of electricity pylons and attacks on other infrastructure, including power stations, in the mountainous region.

In 1967, the most serious BAS attack took place at a mountain pass called Porzscharte – between East Tyrol (Austria) and South Tyrol (Italy) – where four Italian soldiers were killed.





Sweden Democrats a vicious anti-migrants poster

## SWEDEN | Sweden Democrats stoke up hate

FROM DANIEL VERGARA FOR EXPO IN STOCKHOLM

THE FAR RIGHT Sweden Democrats (SD) party has launched a vicious anti-migrants hate campaign in the Östermalmstorg tube station in central Stockholm with a picture of a beggar and remarks like "Sorry about the mess here in Sweden" and "We have a serious problem with forced begging".

The SD's campaign has been publicly slammed and a demonstration against the poster campaign gathered thousands. It is not the first time the party has campaigned against beggars. In last year's European Parliament elections, the party employed similar rhetoric.

Migrants are also being violently attacked. At the end of June, the anti-fascist Expo project mapped attacks against EU migrants, showing that, in the last 18 months, 73 incidents been reported. Twenty-three of these were assault and twelve were arson. Since the latest SD campaign started in August more attacks been reported. In Boden, shots were fired at a car in which migrants were sleeping, in Gothenburg, two migrants were abused and, soon after, three motor homes set ablaze at the same place. In Töreboda, petrol bombs were thrown at cars with beggars inside them.



The Firm, a popular Oi! band in extreme right-wing circles

## NETHERLANDS | Nazi music revival?

FROM JEROEN BOSCH FOR ALERT! IN AMSTERDAM

NAZI BANDS ARE reviving in the Netherlands. Recently, Blindfolded performed together with the veterans of The Firm, a popular Oi! band in extreme right-wing circles, at a bar in Schiedam.

On the occasion, dozens of boneheads filled the place, most wearing T-shirts with right wing slogans or symbols. Nazi tattoos were seen and Hitler salutes were made: all noted by an undercover journalist from *Nieuwe Revu*. Using information provided by anti-fascist researchers, the journalist was able to put names and CV's to the faces he saw at the gig.

Blindfolded, new on the nazi scene, is led by Marcel Flink, a Blood&Honour activist and former owner of Landstorm records. In May last year, the band played at a memorial gig in France for a Hammerskin who died in 2004. In Germany, it later played alongside several top nazi bands, including Sleipnir.

Blindfolded is not explicit on its Facebook profile nor in its lyrics but is now definitely regarded as a nazi band in The Netherlands. Schiedam's city council was not amused about the concert and wants notice of gigs in future. The bar's owners, uncomfortable about bad publicity and the Hitler saluting, say they will not book frequent visitors The Firm again.

## GREECE | Golden Dawn: parody of a trial drags on

FROM PANAYOTE DIMITRAS FOR GREEK HELSINKI MONITOR IN ATHENS

GOLDEN DAWN'S big trial started on 20 April. Fourteen hearings were then formally held until 28 July when the court adjourned for the summer, setting the next hearing for 11 September 2015. In the final two hearings, the deputy prosecutor was absent through illness.

Very little progress has been achieved in the twelve sessions so far, barring that the court accepted that the lawyers of the victims of the few Golden Dawn attacks included in the charges could also participate as civil claimants against all defendants, including the GD leadership and parliamentary group in

2012-2015, but only with respect to the specific charges.

There will be no civil claimants, however – in strict application of complicated Greek laws that recognise only direct victims as civil claimants – for the main charge that GD formed a criminal organisation that committed scores of attacks.

Meanwhile, none of the GD MPs on trial are any longer in custody (which could not lawfully last for more than 18 months). Worse, the house arrest restrictions imposed on those released from prison have been lifted and they can resume full political activity.

Because of this and other attacks, Kienesberger was sentenced to multiple life imprisonment terms in Italy in absentia. Austrian courts acquitted Kienesberger on appeal. He avoided further prosecution by moving to Germany where he lived since the 1970s around Nuremberg and worked as publisher and journalist for right-wing publications.

Together with the late Austrian nazi boss, Norbert Burger, he was co-founder of the far right National Democratic Party that lasted from 1967 until 1988 before falling foul of Austria's anti-Nazi laws.

The Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) published an obituary lauding Kienesberger as "one of the most important South Tyrolean freedom fighters".

■ For the latest international news visit <http://hopenothate.org.uk/news/world/> or scan the QR code right >>

■ Is Hungary run by the radical right? page 48





## USA | Profiting from flag backlash

FROM SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTRE  
IN MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

IN JUNE, 21-year-old white nationalist Dylan Roof murdered nine African-Americans at an historic black church in Charleston, South Carolina. When pictures of Roof adorning himself with the Confederate flag surfaced, Southern states took steps to remove it and other symbols of the racist Confederacy from public spaces.

These actions prompted outrage from both white nationalists and a sizable minority of Southerners. Well over 150 rallies in support of the Confederate flag have since taken place in dozens of states. While a number of openly racist groups have organized rallies, the racist League of the South (LOS) has been most active.

Backlash to the flag removal came at an opportune time for the League. For the past few years, it has focused on promoting "Southern issues" like opposition to immigration and calling for Southern states to secede from the US. The result of its renewed activism has been an increase in size, the majority of new recruits being under the age of 30. At the same time, the rhetoric of its leader Michael Hill has become increasingly extreme and violent. LOS members have attended numerous rallies recently, speaking at some of them.

## SERBIA | Fascists go to university

FROM DAŠKO MILINOVIĆ IN NOVI SAD

AFTER WHAT has now been more than three years of utter disarray for the Serbian far right and fascist street gangs, outlines of their new strategy have begun to appear. Srbska Akcija (SA), the most active nazi group in Serbia, is putting its resources and focus onto students and the universities, trying to recruit there after so many failed attempts on football terraces and in other subcultures.

Many see this as a strange move because SA was, until not long ago, trying to present itself as a street mob. Other anti-fascists see it as expected since the group consisted almost exclusively of history or political science students who founded an SA sub-group and sought a platform for their activities through quasi-academic debates, lectures and other gatherings protected by the Autonomy of Universities Law.

The group gained public attention as the co-organisers of an ultranationalist "Grievance March" to commemorate 20 years of Croatia's repossession of the so-called Republika Srpska Krajina. Both Serbs and Croats heavily used the anniversary of this military action, stained by many war crimes, to stir up nationalist emotions this summer.

## AUSTRALIA | Clashes in Bendigo

SOURCE: THE AGE

ANTI-RACISTS and an anti-Muslim mob clashed in Bendigo, Victoria, on 29 August. The 200 Islamophobes, organised by the far right United Patriots Front, had turned out to oppose plans for a mosque in the city but were met by a lively anti-racist counter-demonstration mobilised by No Room for Racism. When clashes broke out, police used pepper spray to break the opponents apart.

Racist determination to stop the mosque has intensified after the Victorian Civil and Administrative Council dismissed an appeal against the building project. However, much of the impetus has come from outside Bendigo following increased attempts by the right-wing extremist Reclaim Australia movement to gain a foothold with provocative anti-Muslim demonstrations in some of Australia's major cities.

Some of the anti-Islam speakers were not local, and their followers carried Australian flags and placards, including one that said: "Say no to the Islamisation of Bendigo". Another claimed the local council was "sacrificing Bendigo to Islam for their (sic) own greed". The anti-racists at one point played Khe Sanh by Cold Chisel, a reference to rock singer Jimmy Barnes asking right-wing groups not to play his songs. There were no arrests on the day.



## USA | Largest anti-Muslim gathering in U.S. sets sights on refugee rights

FROM KALIA ABIAD FOR CENTER FOR NEW COMMUNITY

In September, ACT! for America, the largest anti-Muslim grassroots organisation in the U.S., will stage its annual national conference in Washington D.C. As in previous years, attendees will hear from prominent anti-Muslim mainstays and congressional lawmakers in the hope of revitalising their hate-driven activism.

In addition to the expected anti-Muslim fear-mongering, refugee rights will be under attack from the main stage.

ACT! recently announced plans to launch a "Refugee Resettlement Working Group", claiming resettlement "doesn't grab as many headlines as terror attacks, but it's just as serious."

ACT! recruited anti-refugee hardliner Ann Corcoran, who runs the blog site Refugee Resettlement Watch, to assist. She will also be a featured speaker at the conference. The conference will also include a "legislative briefing", giving attendees a chance to interact with over

a dozen US lawmakers sympathetic to ACT!'s cause.

The conference's headliner will be Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a former Dutch politician and ally of Geert Wilders. How Ali, a beneficiary of political asylum, will square her beliefs with the virulent anti-refugee rhetoric anticipated for this year's event remains to be seen. But one thing is certain: any rational dialogue will be lost in participants' shared bigotry.



## Guest column...

# The Government's refugee announcement is underpinned by a domestic cynicism which will damage attempts at a co-operative European and international solution

**CLAUDE MORAES MEP**, Chair of the European Parliament's Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs committee and the former Director of the refugee charity Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI), explains why the Government's pledge of increased aid to Syria and the 5 year increase in refugee numbers to the UK is underpinned by cynicism and in the coming days will be seen to have damaged attempts to solve the refugee crisis through EU co-operation.



THE TRAGIC pictures of Alan Kurdi have had some effect, they have certainly changed the mood of the debate in the UK – how could they have not? For David Cameron, stung into action by public opinion, the British announcement to many seems a generous change in UK policy.

In fact, since 2011, the UK has granted asylum to around 5,000 asylum seekers, and under the Vulnerable Persons Refugee (VPR) Scheme 216 Syrian refugees have been re-settled in the UK since March 2014. Both of these figures – the asylum figures and the refugee resettlement figure – are amongst the lowest in the EU by far, so cannot be seen to be generous at all.

The combined announcement by David Cameron of substantially increased aid and the extension of the VPR programme to resettle 20,000 over five years may seem a major shift in policy.

However, while the aid budget increase is hugely welcome, looked at closely this can be seen as a cynical policy that will not see a very substantial increase in refugee numbers in the UK.

It seems that the *quid pro quo* is that the UK keeps refugee resettlement numbers at a minimum while opting out of EU relocation and resettlement

mechanisms which are funded relatively fast and would see the UK take a more reasonable share of the refugee burden.

The announcement of 20,000 over 5 years under the VPR scheme and the aid package represents a direction of travel which will see the UK opt out of not only relocation and resettlement measures but a range of other key EU proposals which will encompass search and rescue and other possible new proposals in strengthening the European asylum system, including the possibility of some legal routes to outpace the actions of people smugglers.

What will progress look like for the UK and EU if both were serious? For the UK, it is with sorrow rather than anger that we already see a government being dragged into positive action by widening outrage but whose default position in the European Union is to operate on an "opt-out" stance from all refugee and immigration policy.

It is crucial that, on 14 September, the UK signals that it will "opt-in" to co-ordinate EU action for an organised and compassionate solution to the refugee crisis working with other EU countries in solidarity. Other countries who have an "opt out", such as Ireland, have shown that

it is possible to opt in as they are currently doing with search and rescue in the Mediterranean.

What the UK and EU need to be signing up to in the next two weeks is a significant shift from the weak and insignificant action called The "European agenda on migration" which was agreed before the summer and is now seen for what it is, a set of decent policies proposed by the European Commission but not taken seriously by the Member States of the EU.

For example, the numbers spoken of in terms of resettlement for the whole of the EU (20,000) and currently being spoken of in terms of relocation (40,000) are utterly insignificant, but it now looks as though that the number for relocation will increase to 120,000 for the EU.

It is also difficult for the EU to look into the eyes of Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan (who have taken millions). While the UK gives development aid to Syria, it is particularly culpable in the insignificant number of Syrian refugees it has resettled – the lowest in the EU up till now.

Now that the EU and the world as a whole are watching, it would be particularly shameful for the UK to continue to "opt-out" from these issues. The UK, though,

wants to cherry pick refugees from camps but not touch refugees who have come to the shores of Europe. How can this be a sustainable position for a large EU Member State?

In addition to the measures agreed before in the European Agenda on Migration, there must be an understanding of the special nature of this crisis. We have some EU member states displaying actions that are deeply shaming for the EU and its values. In the light of recent events in Hungary and the Czech Republic, clear leadership must be taken by the big EU member states to reassert moral authority and to wipe away the lame excuses peddled over issues like as the Dublin Convention which, along with many asylum directives, have not been operated properly by EU member states for many years.

Hungary's insistence on operating the Dublin Convention when Germany has relaxed it for correct, decent and compassionate reasons is where the European Union should be, not where Viktor Orban's Hungary currently is.

The EU and the UK has a moment in which to express its values. Let us hope it makes the right decisions on refugees. The world will be watching. ●



# Cartoon exhibition cancelled as counter-jihadists fall out

by Nick Lowles

**T**he planned Muhammad cartoon exhibition, planned for mid-September, was abruptly cancelled by the event organizer, Anne Marie Waters, late last month.

Citing security concerns, she claimed was left with no choice but to cancel the event. "Britain is a frightened nation," she said "and our freedom is not going away, it has gone."

Writing on her Sharia Watch website, as well as for the right-wing Breitbart site, she said: "Over the last few weeks, I have had several conversations with both Scotland Yard and counter-terror detectives. My conclusion? That the risk of running this exhibition is simply too high. When setting out to do something like this, one has to be prepared for the possibility of threats, or even violence, but it's easy to underestimate the impact such things will have on the people around you."

"There's a very real possibility that people could be hurt or killed – before, during, and after the event. This, together with the fact that our venue had indicated it wanted to pull out citing security and insurance concerns, and given the fear that people were feeling generally, the only responsible thing to do was to pull back and try to learn some lessons. I have not learned lessons as much as I have had my suspicions confirmed. There are two major messages to take on board from this episode: 1) Britain is a frightened nation, and 2) our freedom is not going away, it has gone."

Even before Waters' announcement, the release of HOPE not hate's investigation into plans for a

Muhammad cartoon exhibition led to members of the counter-jihadist movement falling out with each other.

First out of the blocks was Danish anti-Muslim activist Anders Gravers, who told the Danish newspaper *Globalt* that he owned the rights to the cartoons displayed by the counter-jihadist doyen, Pam Geller, in Texas this May but had nothing to do with the new London exhibition.

He said that he was looking to hold a cartoon exhibition over here himself but if current UK organiser and UKIP member Waters found a venue first he would not stand in her way.

Given that he had failed to organise such an event in Denmark, the chances of Gravers finding a venue in London were always zilch.

The anti-Muslim and fake veterans' outfit, Britain First (BF), was quick to distance itself from any attempts to stir up trouble with a cartoon exhibition, re-releasing a statement first made in early July.

In response to a Russia Today piece on the cartoon exhibition linking BF founder Jim Dowson to the plot, party leader Paul Golding issued a strong denial: "Major efforts behind the scenes have been made to rope Britain First into the mad plot to ferment civil strife on the streets of Britain, using Mohammed cartoon contests."

The statement went on: "We are not against depictions of the false prophet Mohammed, but to use them cynically to spark off serious communal chaos and bloodshed is a despicable strategy and Britain First has nothing to do with it."

Dowson, who first reported the

attempts to incite civil strife by way of the cartoons, also wrote a blog claiming the exhibition's organisers were part of an international Zionist conspiracy designed to help Israel attack Iran.

Waters, the cartoon exhibition organiser, broke her silence in a blog on her own Sharia Watch website and co-posted on the UKIP-linked Breitbart site.

After a couple of days of total denial to the media, she then admitted that she had attended a meeting with Jim Dowson and – most amazingly – a discussion about civil war might (she admitted) have occurred.

In a blog entitled: "Hard Left Campaigners Lied About Islam Vs West 'Civil War' Claim", in which she completely denied our allegation that she was involved in a conversation about using a cartoon exhibition to incite a violent reaction, she wrote: "That meeting did take place – to talk about building a website (which I believe the writer does for a living). If there was any talk of 'civil war', then it will have been by way of conversation, not some cartoon-like plot. In any case, aren't people allowed to speculate on the potential for discord, especially given the current state of "multiculturalism" in Britain?"

In between abusing everyone connected to HOPE not hate as being part of the "hard left", she conveniently omitted to tell her readers that she ignored a request for an interview with HOPE not hate on these matters, which we sent to her by e-mail on 7 July.

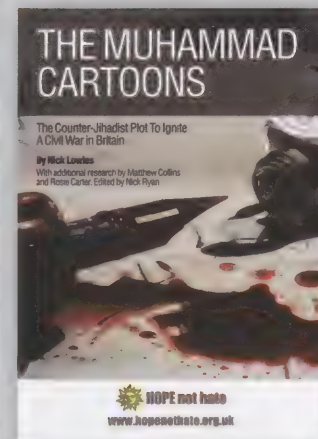
Waters also denied speaking at an anti-Muslim English Defence League (EDL) rally. While this was technically correct, she neglected to admit that she had





Anne Marie Waters speaking at the All Football Fans/Firms Against Islamisation (AFFAI) demo in June 2015

## THE MUHAMMAD CARTOON EXHIBITION



HOPE not hate issued a special report in late July outlining a plan by a group of British 'counter-jihadists' (anti-Muslim activists) to host a 'Muhammad cartoon' exhibition in central London on 18 September with the deliberate intention of inciting a violent reaction from British Muslims.

The event was to be attended by infamous far right Dutch politician Geert Wilders.

The counter-jihadists view using Muhammad cartoons as a way of illustrating what they believe is the incompatibility between Islam and the West.

Our report revealed that some in the counter-jihad movement believe that civil war between Muslim and non-Muslim communities is not only inevitable but desirable.

The – now cancelled – exhibition's organiser is Anne Marie Waters, a former lawyer who was a candidate for UKIP in the recent general election. She currently runs Sharia Watch UK.

Only three weeks before Waters announced the cartoon exhibition was to take place, she was involved in long discussions with Stephen Lennon (the founder and former leader of the English Defence League), as well as Alan Ayling (one of Britain's leading counter-jihadists, who helped found the EDL) and Jim Dowson, founder of the far-right/mosque invading party, Britain First.

The quartet openly discussed using the cartoons (which cause offence to many Muslims) to incite a violent backlash, which they hoped would spark a wider conflict between communities and, ultimately, civil war.

Our report also revealed that Lennon, who was pushing the cartoon exhibition on social media, was planning to become joint leader of Sharia Watch after his license period for his mortgage fraud ended in late-July.





spoken at a rally in Dudley organised by All Football Fans/Firms March Against Islamisation, an EDL splinter group led by Kevin Bryant – who just happens to be in the EDL (as does his Polish partner Tee, who is also known to Waters).

Jim Dowson then released another blog. In a startling Q&A on the Knights Templar website, he went into more detail about what happened at the meeting with the trio. Invited along to discuss plans to set up a new anti-Islam organization that Waters described as an “EDL with membership”, discussion moved on to running a cartoon competition.

“As the meeting progressed I was interested in how they would attract a following given that the ‘right-wing’ anti Islam ‘market’ was rather crowded and Britain First had almost a monopoly on the scene,” Dowson wrote.

“It was then,” he continued, “the issue of cartoons was brought up. Anne Marie Waters outlined her idea of a Mohammed Cartoon competition. It was also muted (sic) by the others that the displaying of cartoons should occur in towns and cities with large Muslim communities both here in Britain and possibly in Europe. Robinson and Ayling both contributed to this discussion. However, it seemed to me that Ms Waters was very much the driving force in this enterprise.”

Dowson added: “As the conversation progressed it became apparent that this idea was, as far as I was concerned, extremely dangerous and ill conceived. I was becoming aware of the true intent of the whole operation and was seriously concerned at what I was hearing...It

became very obvious that the intent was to use the pretense [sic] of ‘freedom of speech’ to ferment a backlash from the Muslim community. This was not an opinion formulated by me but rather a conclusion based on statements from all three participants. I pointed out that such a ‘stunt’ would definitely ignite the fires of a civil war and this had the potential to result in the deaths of thousands of innocent people.”

Intriguingly, Dowson said that he had an “observer” in the room and a video was made and handed over to his lawyer the following morning.

Predictably, the counter-jihadists reacted with fury to Dowson’s interview, with ex-EDL boss Stephen Lennon going on the attack most forcefully. He began bombarding the Dowson with phone calls and text messages, many of which accused him of being a “dirty snake” and a “coward”.

Lennon went on to state, via Twitter, that there was nothing he said to Dowson at the meeting that he would not say publicly.

Writing under another name, it appears that Dowson reached out to Lennon and attempted to draw a line under the affair but the former EDL leader instantly rejected this.

Publicly, though, Dowson was not backing down. In response to Lennon’s veiled threats, he posted a message on Facebook: “Who works a sting the best – a bee or the cops? Both use little flowers but thankfully here in Ulster we have good ears and eyes and can hear the buzz from 20 paces. Better luck next time boys.” He accompanied the post with a picture of a bee.

With Dowson and Lennon accusing the other of working for the police, the infighting within the counter-jihad movement looks set to rumble on.

Meanwhile, we stand behind the main tenets of our report: namely, that those now so loudly proclaiming that “all” they want is a private exhibition did, indeed, discuss civil strife as part of their plans.

There was also trouble brewing in the Lawyers Secular Society (LSS), one of the key sponsors of the cartoon exhibition. Some of its members were outraged that the group’s secretary, Charlie Klendijan, was down as a speaker, along with the organisation’s name being listed.

The dissenters demanded a vote and, surprisingly to them, they lost and the members agreed to back the cartoon exhibition. But Klendijan, who works as an in-house lawyer for mobile network operator and internet service provider EE, was obviously feeling the heat. In the immediate aftermath of the exhibition’s cancellation, he resigned from the LSS, explaining the whole affair had been “thoroughly unpleasant and scary”.

He even amended his various contributions to the LSS website, claiming that his involvement in the whole anti-Sharia movement was only ever “calm and well-reasoned”.

Not so, according to Private Eye. In a speech at the House of Lords last April, Klendijan said: “Civil war or something akin to a violent revolution might eventually be the only means of reversing the influence of Sharia law in the UK.”

He went on to say that there was a choice of “fighting this battle now, with our words” or leave it to “the generation





(left to right) Jim Dowson, Stephen Lennon, Paul Weston, Charlie Klendjian and Geert Wilders

which follows to fight it with their blood.”

No venue? It is questionable whether Anne Marie Waters actually ever had a venue at all. Certainly when HOPE not hate published its report into the cartoon affair a few weeks ago she did not have a venue, a fact was evident from the almost frantic e-mails she sent people asking for help in finding one.

Her decision publicly to announce the cartoon exhibition – that was to be attended by Dutch far right politician Geert Wilders – without having actually secured a venue had led some of her counter-jihadist friends to question whether she was capable of putting the event together at all.

Her blog, cancelling the event, went on to defend her decision to invite Paul Weston to speak: “Some of the attacks aimed at us (from those who ought to support us) were allegedly made because of Paul Weston’s planned presence at the event. Weston is the leader of the Liberty GB political party. He has made some speeches about the future of white people, and according to those who set the rules, this is a step too far. The demographic-that-cannot-be-named was named, and this was more than enough to cancel Weston’s speaking rights thenceforth (though of course if it hadn’t been Weston, it would’ve been Wilders).”

Weston is a self-declared “racist” who, like many other counter-jihadists, believes Islam is set to take over Europe within 30 years because of immigration and higher birth rates.

But while some counter-jihadists depict the clash with Islam as a cultural or religious battle, Weston sees this as a racial issue. In a speech titled

“Preventing White Genocide”, he explains how the future of the white British race is under threat from Islam and its pending disappearance is a “racial crime”.

Weston’s solution is simple: “Islam has to be removed from Europe, from Britain, from England; and this is now the position that Liberty GB is taking.”

In other articles, Weston has gone further. In a series of articles written in 2007 and posted up on the infamous Gates of Vienna blog, he expanded on his apocalyptic vision of the future and articulated the civil war prognosis. He suggested that the growing Muslim population would mean that, by 2025, there would be just two white European young men to every one Muslim. Given Muslims’ supposed predisposition to war and imposing their faith (Sharia law, etc) on the West, conflict would ensue.

Like other counter-jihadists, Weston dismissed attempts to contain Islam in the hope that moderate Muslims would reclaim their religion. He claimed Western liberalism and appeasement only added to the “problem”. With mass deportation not a viable option, all that was left was for white European men to fight back.

“The wholesale and unprecedented racial and cultural transformation of a continent with a history of violent warfare will simply not happen without confrontation.”

“We will simply have to. Not for domination, but for survival.” he argued

Waters refuses to condemn Weston. She is at best an apologist for his racist views. At worst, she agrees with them.

She certainly does agree with a lot

of Weston’s solutions to the “Islam problem”. Speaking at a counter-jihad rally outside Downing Street in April, she said: “For a start the immigration will have to stop, the immigration from Islamic countries has to stop entirely,” she told the protest. “That’s just the way it is. A lot of people need to be deported. Many mosques need to be closed down. It really does have to get tough.”

Waters ends her rant by declaring the need for “a global coalition for free speech”: “It needs to have a voice at the UN (and take on the OIC), as well as the EU (also busy with hate speech and “tolerance”), and in as many countries as possible. It cannot be a talking shop put together to discuss shouting fire in a crowded theatre, but a tireless campaign to actively defend, by legislation and other means, the right of people to criticise, analyse, reject, satirise, and mock any single set of beliefs which is capable of affecting society as a whole, especially its freedoms... This movement must actively confront the lies and deception that so pose a threat to our liberty.”

Despite her best attempts to dress up the exhibition’s cancellation as forced upon her, the decision was a humiliating climbdown and she is now viewed as flaky and unreliable.

The police report that she claimed she was given has never materialised, only increasing the suspicion that she either did not have a venue or the internal warfare in the counter-jihad movement had made the event untenable.

While this is to be welcomed, we should not delude ourselves that the threat of the counter-jihadists has gone.



# Liverpool – nazis s

Matthew Collins reports



THEY PROMISED a race-war and threatened it would take bullets to stop them. Nothing was going to prevent National Action from exploding through the barriers at Liverpool Lime Street station and show the world there was no place they could not march.

"In years to come, your Grandchildren will talk of this day and how NA made history," they wittered to themselves.

"Anti-fascists who use the Spanish 'No Pasaran' (sic) phrase forget that the Spanish Fascists did pass! Just like we will pass today" wrote Manchester's Jack Renshaw, just hours before he was photographed crying in the

left luggage office at Lime Street as bananas, water and litter rained down on his and his colleagues' heads.

Liverpool came out in force on 15th August 2015. Perhaps our grandchildren *will* talk about that day, after all. Nobody was murdered, no shootings, no stabbings and only one arrest. Yet they came: the black-clad anarchists, the corduroy Communists, the bespectacled anoraks, the football casuals and the impassioned passers-by to bar a group that openly calls for the murder of Jews to move one inch unmolested in their city.

On the steps of Liverpool's Lime Street station, the

early arrivals posed and saluted with all of the juvenile stupidity of people who believe their own propaganda.

Within minutes they were holed up in a pub surrounded by police as wave after wave of fists, boots and yes, bananas were aimed at them.

As their leaders arrived to prepare for some kind of cabaret entrance onto the station concourse, they were chased behind police lines. Hundreds of people converged on the station... not the greeting National Action expected.

Had the people of Liverpool not heard about their fearsome reputation?

They had sent their fighting men, highly trained, we have been told, out to fight. They were sent back bruised, however.

They then sent out the North West Infidels, an infamous far right gang of drug dealing bullies. This lot tried to hide, but eventually scarpered.

And, then, early afternoon, some two hours after the nazis had been locked in the left luggage behind shutters for their own safety, Blood&Honour's wrinkled boneheads arrived, all shaven, tattooed and menacing, to force their way in and National Action's way out.

They, too, were despatched



# sent packing



Get in the sea: About to create local folklore, antifascists march to Lime Street

back – bloodied – behind police lines. By the time National Action was tunnelling out of Liverpool behind a massive human shield of police officers, it felt like the whole city had hurled bananas at them.

They came to Liverpool to start a race war and to harass and intimidate Jews, blacks, the Irish, Muslims, gays and everyone else they do not like.

Argument with this hate, drugs and alcohol-frenzied mob was superfluous. Their sort of blind hatred has no traction with any part of society. It does not resonate.

It was a clear case of ¡No Pasarán! and Liverpool made sure they didn't.



(above) Nazi Milkshake: Dave Magsan and Josie Muncie run foul of lunchtime shoppers

(top left) Turner turned over: The 'inspirational' Jez Turner, shortly after being relieved of his train ticket, glasses and notebook

(bottom left) Protected: Police try to move the nazis out through the carpark under the station



# Our Cup Of Tea

**Julie Siddiqi on a campaign to challenge the hatred of the counter-jihadists by bringing people together**

AS WE HAVE learned more and more about the motivations and the people behind the planned "Draw Muhammad cartoon" exhibition, it was clear something positive needed to be done in response.

Their talk about civil war, about dividing communities and about inciting violence left us knowing that we could not sit back and allows that to become normal in our country. To hide incitement to violence behind rhetoric around "free speech" and defending British values is something that cannot go unchallenged.

Of course, within communities and local areas, there are inter-community issues and tensions and to deny that would be naïve and unhelpful and a national discussion needs to continue around free speech and what that means in modern Britain, including how it affects the Muslim and other communities and how they respond to provocation, sometimes of the worst kind.

It is crucial that we encourage an environment

of people sitting, meeting, talking, planning and working together. Relationships need to be built, work needs to be done together, people need to find common ground to work from while recognising and respecting differences: collaboration and co-operation in everything we do.

*Our Cup Of Tea* is a campaign we are starting now and will continue into the future, encouraging people to meet someone different to them – maybe someone with different religious or political beliefs – and in groups or in pairs, in places of worship, in community centres and in workplaces and in coffee shops.

Tea has a naturally unifying quality about it. Whether it is Arabian mint tea, English afternoon tea, Asian pink tea, chamomile tea and so many others. It is drunk the world over and has always been used to calm nerves, to relax after a busy day and, yes, to bring people together.

*Our Cup Of Tea* is a campaign that everyone can get involved with: so easy, so simple to organise with small



budgets and great outcomes.

We are creating a gallery of photographs from all over the country, people having tea together, a first step to longer-term work together in many cases.

On the weekend of the 18–20 September, there will be a number of events up and down the country. It is a symbolic and very powerful way to say we will not allow our communities to be divided and will come together as people of this country who want to work for the common good and not to keep people apart.

Maybe you can speak to a local coffee shop and encourage it to open its doors for a couple of hours and

advertise it as a drop-in for local people

Maybe you can bring your neighbours together for afternoon tea and then make a plan to host it regularly in future.

Maybe you are passionate about your football team and for the sake of the campaign, are willing to meet someone who supports a rival team and have tea with them, in your team shirts.

Take photos, take selfies, in groups and as individuals, in mosques and churches, in coffee shops and in the street. We very much want to see a variety of photos form the gallery.

And from that we know that people will be motivated and spurred on to do more, all year round, with the people with whom they have developed relationships.

Now that is surely our cup of tea...



**For more  
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# REFUGEE AND MIGRATION SPECIAL

## 26 PAGE FEATURE

(right) Memorial to drowned migrants, Lampedusa, Italy

(below) The sailors and Royal Marines of HMS Bulwark help migrants ashore. Photo Royal Navy Media Archive





# Crisis Unfolding

By Nick Ryan

THE WORLD was shocked by the image of 3-year-old Kurdish child, Alan Kurdi, whose body was washed up on a Turkish beach at the start of September. Just one more static on the dangerous crossing from the Middle East into Europe – yet a turning point for previously hostile governments and European public opinion, which in some countries (including our own) had been hardening towards refugees.

Soon after we witnessed shocking scenes from Hungary, building a fence along its border with Serbia, where thousands of people (many of them fleeing conflict in Syria) were prevented from leaving Budapest's Keleti train station and were also attacked by far-right groups. Hungarian PM Victor Orban lived up to his reputation as one of the most right-leaning of all Europe's premiers, refusing for many days to let the refugees travel onwards to Austria. Alongside him, both Slovakia and the Czech Republic had been noticeably hostile to accepting more migrants and refugees across their territories, with Slovakia saying it would only accept 'Christian refugees'. Yet it was Britain that grabbed the headlines – and for all the wrong reasons.

Despite the UK government's frustration that its efforts funding camps near Syria was being ignored, with



Alan Kurdi's death public opinion started turning against David Cameron. The Prime Minister, who had previously referred to "swarms" of migrants and refused to take in more than a few hundred refugees under existing programmes, was forced to change course and a week after Alan's death he had announced that the UK would accept 20,000 thousand refugees over the next four-and-a-half years.

As YouGov published a

poll suggesting attitudes were softening towards refugees (though one-third of Brits remained opposed to accepting more), it was Germany that took the lead and garnered accolades from the human rights field. It announced it was planning to accept up to 800,000 refugees this year, a staggering number which dwarfed our 4,000-per-year offer. Highly-publicised initiatives showed Germans (and Icelanders) welcoming refugees into their homes,

whilst the Finnish prime minister opened his second home to refugees. Chancellor Merkel accepted that her country was likely to be changed forever by the huge numbers it would bring in, but with a high percentage of ageing pensioners and falling population (unlike the UK), Germany clearly needed immigration.

Meanwhile, even the normally-staid US media began lambasting British tabloid newspapers for their





"Peace/Abandoned": graffiti showing death of 3-year-old Aylan Kurdi



up-to-now hostile coverage of the migrant crisis at Calais, with one digital outlet, vox.com, highlighting a previous Sun front cover from July, with one calling on Cameron to act now that Alan Kurdi had died. (It also contrasted a similar Daily Mail cover, from July, titled 'The Swarm in Our Streets', with a cover now apparently moved by Alan's death).

Meanwhile, even though public opinion was slow to shift, many volunteers

gathered aid and delivered it via convoys to the camps in Calais, and beyond, helped by crowdfunding campaigns and the rapid spread of messages via social media. Hashtags such as #RefugeeLivesMatter helped push the effort, whilst groups such as Cal Aid warned there were too many people and the wrong materials now arriving.

Yet the reality is that, despite the changing attitudes, the crisis is still huge. There is no let up in

the numbers of those trying to reach Europe, as the regions they leave behind continue to destabilise. As welcome as they might be, even the most generous European efforts will not be enough to solve the problem – merely bind some of the wounds it has caused.

And UN agencies such as the UNHCR, which looks after refugees, and UNICEF, which is responsible for children, are facing a funding crisis (the current global humanitarian

funding budget for all countries stands at \$19.52bn – £12.84bn – but only \$7.15bn of that has been raised from international donors) whilst populist parties such as UKIP insist we must pull the drawbridge up and that those coming here might not all be refugees. In this Nigel Farage was parroted by the conspiracy-led Express newspaper, suggesting that the Islamic State had smuggled 4,000 terrorists into Europe masked as refugees. ●

## WHAT TO DO

The outpouring of sympathy and demand for action towards refugees is amazing but we all know it won't last. Fatigue will set in, pledges will be broken and soon the press and politicians will revert back to their immigrant-bashing ways.

We have a small window of opportunity in which to make long-term changes.

Based on your feedback we've decided to do three main things:

- 1 To call for a fairer deal for refugees and migrants, including those living in destitution in the UK
- 2 To raise money and collect essential items for those in need across the continent as winter approaches
- 3 Oppose the forthcoming Immigration Act, which will instantly criminalise hundreds of thousands of undocumented people in the UK.

To achieve these goals we need your help. We need people who can lead an action or collection in their own area. We will provide you with a 'How to' guide on running a local action and support you along the way.

Please sign up to our 'Window of Opportunity' page if you are willing to help organise an event or collection in your area:

<http://action.hopenothate.org.uk/page/s/our-window>



## MIGRATION SPECIAL



**In this special section of HOPE not hate magazine, we'll explore the migration crisis and look at the lives of those most affected.**

We'll hear about:

- the true facts of the crisis
- the media and political reaction
- what it's like to survive a hazardous sea crossing to Europe
- an investigation into the people traffickers who enslave migrants
- how Australia's hardline asylum policy is not the one we should be seeking to follow

### DEFINITIONS

**REFUGEES** persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution. Refugees are defined and protected in international law.

**MIGRANTS** move to improve their lives by finding work, or in some cases for education, family reunion, or other reasons. Unlike refugees who cannot safely return home, migrants face no such impediment to return.

(Source: UNHCR)

# Nations on

## The story of the worst refugee crisis in human history

By Nick Ryan; Research by Elisabeth Pop

**I**t has been called the worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War. A population equivalent to the 24th largest country in the world is on the move, forced to flee by persecution and war, as well as famine and poverty.

The migration crisis, as it is being called – summed up by images of boatloads of desperate people clinging to dinghies, or the nightly incursions towards the Channel Tunnel – has ignited passions and divided opinion here more than any other issue.

And it is true: Europe is facing a growing maritime migrant crisis. Unless you've been living on the moon, you can hardly fail to have noticed the almost daily images of suffering from the Greek islands, Italy, the Mediterranean, North Africa and the Middle East – as millions are on the move – or the allergic reaction (from politicians and the media) to the possibility some of these people may end up here.

The majority of those taking the sea route to Europe are refugees, and their numbers are continuing to rise rapidly – 219,000 migrants reached Europe by sea in 2014. This year, by 28 August, more than 300,000 people had already made the journey, according to the UNHCR.

During the first four months of 2015, the numbers of those dying at sea reached horrifying new heights. So far, in 2015, around 2,500 people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean (it was just 15 during the first three months of 2014). In April an unprecedented 1,308 refugees drowned or went missing in a single month, sparking a global outcry.

Whilst those risking their lives from people smugglers and the Mediterranean face increasing hardship once they arrive in countries such as Greece

or Italy, the domestic focus here has centred on several thousand migrants in camps in the French port of Calais, with sobriquets such as 'The Jungle' (which *The Telegraph* hysterically likened to "a refugee camp in war-torn Darfur").

Mostly young men fleeing warfare and social chaos in countries like Syria, Iraq, Eritrea and Afghanistan, these migrants have used new tactics to disrupt the passage of cars, trucks and trains through the Channel Tunnel.

With traffic jams on both sides and trade damaged, the media has challenged the government to defend the borders against what Prime Minister David Cameron controversially called "swarms" of illegal migrants. Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond has claimed there are millions of marauding economic migrants from Africa, constituting a threat to European society. After alluding to "desperate migrants marauding around the [Calais] area", Hammond said: "Europe can't protect itself, preserve its standard of living and social infrastructure if it has to absorb millions of migrants from Africa."

There have, of course, been plenty of comments about the lazy or indifferent French, who are often blamed (here) for preventing migrants from cutting thin fences. UKIP MEP Mike Hookem even videoed himself visiting the area, claiming that he had been threatened by a migrant with a gun: it was only several days later that media helpfully pointed out that the 'migrant' had actually been a British gangster.

Across Europe, arguments have raged about who should be responsible for search and rescue missions in the Med, and for those wishing to claim asylum on the continent. As politicians, media and public argue, the suffering shows no signs of abating.



# the move

Migrants in Calais  
Photo: Jey-OH-photographie



## The routes

While in previous years Italy was one of the main routes of migration, this year there has been a major increase in refugees taking the 'eastern Mediterranean route' from Turkey to Greece. However, Italy remains the primary destination for Eritreans, Somalis and other people from sub-Saharan Africa.

Greece, plagued with its own well-publicised problems, is now the epicentre for those migrating across the Mediterranean. More than 85% of those arriving in Greece are from countries experiencing war and conflict, principally Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. Over 100,000 people have arrived in the country so far this year. From Greece, most move onwards across the Balkans to western and northern Europe.

Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees in the world: at least 1.59 million people according to the UNHCR. It is followed by Pakistan (1.51 million), Lebanon (1.15 million), Iran (982,000), Ethiopia (659,500), and Jordan (654,100).



In fact, developing nations host 86% of all refugees.

Once migrants enter the EU, they need to apply for refugee status or asylum in the first country, which is responsible for their claim. But Greece and Italy cannot

process all the applications they receive, further adding to the overspill.

Meanwhile, it is Germany (202,815 last year) and Sweden (81,325) who received the majority (43%) of all asylum applications in the EU last year.



According to Eurostat data released in May, Germany received over *six times* as many applicants for asylum in 2014 as the UK and twice as many as any other country in Europe. Per capita, Sweden accepts the highest number of asylum seekers in Europe. Italy comes third, with 64,625, and France a close fourth with 64,310.

Most European countries have experienced some sort of backlash as a result of recent levels of immigration. recent election results in Denmark prove that even in the most well off, traditionally open, pro-immigration European countries, centre-left government are under pressure to ramp up the anti-immigration rhetoric and policies if they want to stay in power, with no reassurance that will win at the ballot box.

### Where do they come from?

#### ■ Syria

If you had to reduce the world's migrant crisis down to one word, that word would be *Syria*. Last year, 33% of all arrivals into Europe were Syrian refugees.

Half of Syria's entire population, nearly 12 million people, has been displaced over the last four years of civil war, as forces loyal to Bashar al-Assad have battled various rebel groups (and each other), including the so-called Islamic State (IS). Syria is carved up between competing great powers, too, with regional powers Saudi Arabia and Iran, as well as Turkey and Qatar (and other Gulf powers), supporting different factions, with the US carrying out air strikes against IS too.

More than 7.6 million IDPs are displaced within Syria, but it is neighbouring countries that have borne the next heaviest burden. More than 4 million Syrian refugees are scattered across the region, including 1.7 million in Turkey, 1.1 million in Lebanon and 600,000 in Jordan. Lebanon hosts the largest number of refugees in relation to its national population, with one in five people a Syrian refugee. The equivalent per capita is the UK hosting nearly 13 million refugees.

Before 2011, the literacy rate among Syria's children was around 90%. Now half the Syrian refugees arriving in UN camps are children. The war has already claimed 11,000 of their lives.

#### ■ Libya

But Syria is not the only failed state in the Middle East which is adding to the worst humanitarian crisis since World War II.

## THE FACTS

As EU Member States and others debate how best to respond to the worst humanitarian crisis of our era, it is important to place the current refugee crisis in the context of a worldwide rise in forced displacement, due to war, persecution, famine and poverty.

Despite the significant media attention it has garnered, the Mediterranean crisis constitutes a relatively small part of the global picture. It is easy to forget that 86% of the world's refugees are actually hosted in developing countries.

The real picture is far wider than Europe. Today, 60 million people are forcibly on the move – refugees, asylum seekers and the internally displaced.

To put it another way, that's 1 in every 122 people on the planet.

Twenty million are refugees, another 38 million are internally displaced persons (IDPs), living wretched lives inside their own country, and the final two million are asylum seekers.

Most are fleeing war, conflict or persecution. 14.4 million refugees were created last year alone, +2.7 million more than in 2013.

Worse still there is lost generation doomed to no home, with nearly half of all displaced peoples being children – that's nearly 30 million children living in precarious conditions, with poor access to education and often under the threat of exploitation.

160,000 refugees and migrants had arrived in Greece by sea at the end of August this year – a staggering 950% increase on the same period in 2014

The UK has only settled 187 Syrian refugees in 2014 and slightly over 4,000 since the civil war began. Germany is expected to host 800,000 refugees by the end of this year.

In 2014, a mere 126,800 refugees were able to return home, the lowest number of returnees in 30 years.

October 2011 saw the brutal overthrow of former dictator Muammar Gaddafi's regime (with western military help). But by 2014 Libya had become a "failed state" at the mercy of different militias – and a homegrown faction of IS. As the country staggers on the brink of economic collapse and lawlessness, the number of refugees fleeing terrible violence increases.

Libya is also one of the main crossing points for those wishing to cross the Mediterranean into Europe, leading to a deadly tally as rough seas swamp often-flimsy boats.

More than 2,000 migrants are said to have died in 2015 trying to cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe.

#### ■ Afghanistan and Iraq

By the end of 2014 there were an estimated 3.8 million refugees in the Asia and Pacific region, about 2.5 million of them Afghans – 950,000 of them in Iran.

Almost 300,000 people from Pakistan crossed into the tribal areas of Afghanistan's Khost and Paktika provinces due to military operations.

The continuing destabilisation of Iraq, tracing back to its 2003 invasion, has created large numbers of internally displaced. According to the UNHCR, 1.9 million are living as IDPs and a further 2 million have fled to neighbouring countries.

#### ■ Africa

In Africa, Eritrea, Sudan and Somalia are the biggest engines of human displacement.

Eritrea's dismal human rights situation, exacerbated by indefinite military conscription and the incarceration of more than 10,000 political prisoners, has led around 5,000 Eritreans to flee their country every month this year. In fact, Eritrea has had no functioning legislature, independent press, or any semblance of civil society organisations since 2001.

The UN has accused President Isaias Afwerki and his supporters of human rights violations on a "scope and scale seldom witnessed elsewhere".

### Responses

In April, EU member states put forward a 10-point plan to help tackle the crisis, including increased resources for rescue operations and an EU-wide pilot project on resettlement.

The European Council plan to settle 40,000 Syrian and Eritrean asylum-seekers already in Europe, and 20,000 at high risk outside the EU, is voluntary however and some European states have refused to take any refugees at all.

In July, Hungary announced it was building a temporary wall along the Serbian border to curb what the government described as "a daily average of 1,000 illegal border crossings". An estimated 80,000 refugees and migrants have reached Hungary this year – up from 43,000 in 2014 – the vast majority of whom have arrived via Serbia from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The wall, which is planned to be four meters high and 110 miles long and cost around \$35 million, will dwarf the 50 miles long, 15ft tall and





(above) UNHCR refugee camp, Iraq, Nov 2014



(left) Protesters from Amnesty International in body bags on Brighton beach. Photo: Amnesty International

The reality and the rhetoric do not always meet. According to the Government's own figures, there were 25,020 asylum applications in the year ending March 2015, less than 40% of which were accepted. Currently, there are 117,000 refugees in the UK and a further 36,000 are pending asylum-seeking cases. That is less than 0.25% of the UK population and less than 0.75% of the world refugee population, in a country that boasts the sixth largest economy in the world.

The UK only settled 187 Syrian refugees in 2014.

In a letter to *The Guardian* at the beginning of August, leaders of a series of NGOs wrote:

*It is not "marauding" African migrants, but the UK and other wealthy nations that are threatening living standards and causing poverty for people in Africa and across the world. Sub-Saharan Africa loses \$192bn to the rest of the world each year. In return it receives just \$30bn back in aid.*

*The UN is clear that most migrants attempting to reach the EU are fleeing persecution or conflict. These people have the right to protection under international law. The British government claims it wants to stop the minority who are fleeing poverty making dangerous journeys to the UK. The solution does not lie in increased security in Calais. It is in ending our own contributions to global poverty.*

Meanwhile, 200 Jews, including 20 rabbis, have written to the Prime Minister, saying they are "appalled" by his government's response. "Our experience as refugees is not so distant that we've forgotten what it's like to be demonised for seeking safety," they wrote.

One French migrant rights representative, Maya Konforti of l'Auberge Des Migrants, put it more succinctly at a protest in support of migrants in Calais: "Barriers don't work," she said.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of the migrant crisis, it seems unlikely that more fences are going to cure the real reasons why so many people are on the move.

5ft wide barbed wire fence Bulgaria built, back in April, along its border with Turkey.

After initially refusing to take in any refugees, Poland agreed to admit 60 families from Syria, but on the condition that the refugees should all be Christian. There is currently a strong anti-Muslim campaign in Poland (including posters in major cities), with nationalist groups attempting to convince the population that accepting Muslim refugees is tantamount to accepting terrorists.

In August, a Slovak village refused to temporarily take in refugees from Austria. Czech President Milos Zeman has also lashed out at undocumented immigrants saying "no one invited you here", after 100 people who were awaiting deportation tried to flee a detention centre in the northeast of the country, prompting police to use tear gas.

### UK response

The UK's response, meanwhile, has constantly shifted further and further to the right – perhaps reflecting, some would argue, the wider public's reaction

to all forms of immigration (spurred on by an eager media, too).

Although the Home Office's 2013 'go home' vans have been ditched (for now), the Government has announced that is seeking ways to change the rules for asylum seekers (with children) whose applications have failed but who are able to claim benefits in the UK. The message is that "Britain is not a soft touch on asylum".

It is all part of the Government's approach as detailed in the new Immigration Bill. After transforming landlords – who need to check immigration status before renting to anyone – into border security guards, the Government is pushing ahead with a "deport first, appeal later" approach on all immigration cases. For example, there are plans to deport non-EU migrant earning under £35,000 a year after six years of residence.

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# MIGRANT CRISIS

Worldwide,

**1** in every **122**

people on the planet is now either a refugee, internally displaced or seeking asylum



**80**

Nations that host the largest number of refugees

There are

**60million**

displaced people in the world.

If this were the population of a country, it would be the 24th largest in the world.

War, conflict and persecution alone have created

**14.4 million refugees**

last year, 2.7 million more people than 2013 (+25% increase).

20 million of them are refugees, while 38 million are internally displaced persons (meaning they have not crossed an international border) and almost 2 million are asylum seekers.



Half of the sixty million displaced are children – nearly

**30m CHILDREN**

with no access to education, living in precarious conditions and under the constant threat of exploitation.



In 2014, 42,500 new people were displaced every single day. That's a new person forced to flee every other second.





# AS – THE FACTS

Research by Elisabeth Pop

# 60%

of the world refugees are hosted in developing nations, not in the richest countries in the world. Turkey is hosting the largest number of refugees in the world: at least 1.59 million people according to the UNHCR.

Turkey



1.59m

Pakistan



1.51m

Lebanon



1.15m

Iran



982,000

Ethiopia



659,500

Jordan



654,100

2014 saw **219,000** migrants reach Europe by sea. This year, by 28 August, more than 300,000 people have already made the journey. So far, in 2015, almost **2,500 people have died** trying to cross the Mediterranean sea.

Currently, there are 117,000 refugees in the UK and a further 36,000 are pending asylum-seeking cases. That is less than 0.25% of the UK population and less than 0.75% of the world refugee population, in a country that boasts the sixth largest economy in the world.

# 160,000

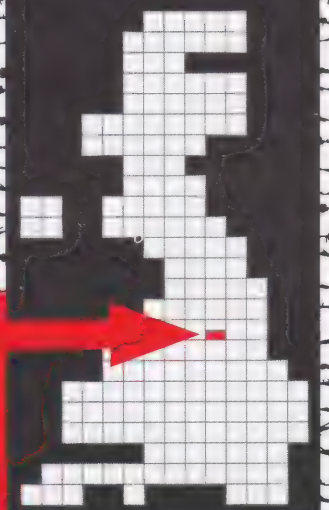
refugees and migrants had arrived in Greece by sea at the end of August this year – a staggering

# 950% increase

on the same period in 2014

The UK has only settled 187 Syrian refugees in 2014 and slightly over 4,000 since the civil war began. Germany is expected to host 800,000 refugees by the end of this year.

% of refugees in the UK compared to the UK population



Sources: UNHCR Annual Global Trends Report, Human Rights Watch, UK Government.



# Europe's Response to Bo

By Benjamin Ward

IT IS EVERY PARENT'S nightmare. A man carried the limp body of a small child off a boat in the Greek island of Rhodes earlier this year. Despite a heroic rescue effort by local people when a boat carrying migrants ran aground, the child died. We don't know the name or story of the child, or what happened to his parents.

The child was among the more than 1,000 people who died in a matter of days in April trying to reach Europe by sea. The death toll sparked an international outcry and call to action.

But half a year later, how much has changed?

The good news is that there is genuine recognition among European leaders that there is a migration crisis that demands a collective response. And there have been positive steps. Notably, there has been a significant increase in patrols by European naval vessels, including operations coordinated by the EU border agency Frontex, answering Italy's call to help out with its rescue efforts.

That has helped arrest the death toll, already at 2,000 for 2015 from escalating further, despite the fact that 150,000 people made the crossing in the first half of 2015. On

August 10, a joint effort involving the Italy and Irish navies and an NGO vessel rescued more than 1,500 in a single day. Without concerted efforts like this, the toll would be far higher.

It is worth recalling that the Mediterranean is the most dangerous border in the world; in 2014, the deadliest year on record, more than 3,500 perished. Over the last decade, an estimated 20,000 people have died at sea and on land attempting to reach Europe.

Solidarity has not extended far beyond joint rescue. Despite a European Commission call in July to relocate 40,000 asylum seekers from Greece and Italy to help these front-line states cope with boat influx, EU ministers only agreed to take 32,256.

Had they agreed to the full 40,000, it still would be far short of what is needed – given the estimated 1,000 migrants and asylum seekers arriving in the Greek Islands every day, amid a mounting humanitarian crisis, and the scale of the global refugee crisis, with four million Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries alone.

The European Commission in August announced more than €2 billion funding for



Coffins of dead migrants in Lampedusa. Photo European Commission

the migration crisis, with large amounts earmarked for Greece and Italy, although it is unclear how much of the total is new money.

But those steps, positive as they are, are only a part of the EU's overall response.

Far more attention and effort has been devoted to a law enforcement response, treating the mass arrivals as a security problem instead of a problem of people in desperate need that requires a humanitarian and protection response.

A special EU summit on migration in April issued conclusions that focused on deterring departures, combating the smuggling that makes these crossings possible, and addressing the "root causes" of migration in countries of origin.

Border control and other enforcement efforts are

perfectly legitimate and in some cases commendable. For example, traffickers or smugglers who deliberately kill migrants – as apparently happened in September 2014 when survivors said a boat carrying 500 people was deliberately sunk – should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

But some of the security initiatives look deeply troubling. For example, the summit decision that the EU should "undertake systematic efforts to identify, capture and destroy vessels before they are used by traffickers" begs the question how such an effort might be carried out in a way that would not endanger the lives of migrants and asylum seekers or impede their access to protection.

Merely curbing smuggling by, for example, destroying boats, will not reduce the



# at Migration



factors that cause migrants to turn to smugglers. In fact, the law of supply and demand suggests that reducing the number of smugglers without addressing the causes of the demand for their services is likely simply to raise the price of the journey. That would make migrants more vulnerable to exploitation once they reach Europe, as they struggle to repay the fare for crossing.

Making it harder to enter by land by building fences, as Greece and Bulgaria have done, has not proven to reduce flows, but rather to divert them to more dangerous sea crossings. Fences also keep people out without distinguishing needs for protection or other vulnerabilities.

Hungary is not only constructing a new border fence to keep people from

crossing the border with Serbia, but has also just added Serbia to its list of "safe third countries" despite that country's record of abuse toward migrants and asylum seekers. Because 99 percent of asylum seekers in Hungary enter via Serbia, this means that Hungary has created a system that makes hard for asylum seekers to reach the country and is likely to exclude the asylum claims of most of those who do.

Addressing root causes is, broadly speaking, a laudable objective. But important efforts like resolving the conflict in Syria, or ending human-rights abuse in Eritrea, are unlikely to bear fruit in the short term, and so are not a substitute for providing protection in Europe now.

Migration cooperation with abusive governments

like Eritrea, through the EU's Khartoum Process, risk impeding people's ability to flee persecution and abuse and to seek safety without improving human rights conditions that cause people to leave.

Neither aid nor trade is going to eliminate the economic disparity between sub-Saharan Africa and the EU in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, many people will feel that they have no choice but to risk everything to reach a more politically and economically stable Europe.

How then, should the EU respond?

First, EU governments should ensure that life-saving search-and-rescue operations continue in the Mediterranean.

Second, EU countries should step up resettlement. The agreement to resettle 22,504 refugees from outside the EU is a good first step, but not nearly sufficiently to meet the need. In fact, the new pledge is still less than a fifth of United Nations refugee agency's estimated global resettlement needs for 2015. The EU countries should also

significantly increase their pledges and quickly relocate asylum seekers from Greece and Italy.

Third, the EU should explore other measures to allow safe and legal travel to the EU. That should include facilitating family reunification and issuing humanitarian visas to enable people in need of international protection to travel lawfully to the EU to apply for asylum or resettlement, based on humanitarian criteria as well as refugee status.

Fourth, EU leaders should publicly acknowledge that while there are areas of crisis, like the Greek Islands, and the French port city of Calais, as the richest trading bloc in the world EU has the collective capacity to manage its migration crisis.

EU leaders and all of us should also remember that it was not so long ago that Europeans themselves were refugees in the hundreds of thousands, and needed safe haven. Above all, like the local people who tried to save the life of the drowning child in Rhodes, we should remember our common humanity. ●



■ Benjamin Ward is deputy director of the Human Rights Watch Europe and Central Asia division @Benjamin\_P\_Ward



# I was a Lampedusa

Hakim Bello survived crossing the Mediterranean from Libya to reach Europe.

THE BOY next to me fell to the floor and for a moment I didn't know if he had fainted or was dead – then I saw that he was covering his eyes so he didn't have to see the waves any more. A pregnant woman vomited and started screaming. Below deck, people were shouting that they couldn't breathe, so the men in charge of the boat went down and started beating them. By the time we saw a rescue helicopter, two days after our boat had left Libya with 250 passengers on board, some people were already dead – flung into the sea by the waves, or suffocated downstairs in the dark. It's very difficult for me to think about this, nearly four years after I paid a smuggler to get me out of Libya, but it's important for people to understand what is happening to us and why.

I'm one of several hundred thousand people who, since the Arab uprisings of 2011, have arrived in Europe across the Mediterranean. It is now the deadliest border in the world. We all have different reasons for doing it: some people think they'll find a better life in Europe, others just want to get away from a war zone. But everyone feels they have no other option.

We soon realised the biggest problem was the waves.

I'm originally from Nigeria and I had been living in Libya for five years when the war broke out. I had a good life: I was working as a tailor and I earned enough to send money home to loved ones. But after the fighting started, people like us – black people – became very vulnerable, because all the youth had weapons and they knew we had money in our houses and they could rob us. If you went out for something to eat, a gang would stop you and ask if you supported them. They might be rebels, they might be government, you didn't know.

I couldn't go back to Nigeria – the way south was blocked – so I met some

people in Tripoli who said they knew how to get to Italy. They took us to a beach outside the city where there were hundreds of people camped out, all waiting to get on a boat. Some were from Syria, or Algeria, or Egypt, but most were from west or east Africa. Lots were men, but there were women and families with small children, too. There are no fixed prices: it depends on what contacts you have and how desperate you are. I paid 400 dinar (equivalent then to about £250), which was one week's salary. The smugglers had taken old commercial fishing boats – some so old they weren't supposed to be used – put new engines in and given them to people they knew. The "captain" of the ship might not even know the way to Italy. He might not even have been a captain before.

When the ship set off, we were worried about the engines breaking down, but we soon realised the biggest problem was the waves. The boat wasn't built for the journey and it was flipped up every time a big wave hit. All I could do was say my last prayer – I felt like I was dead already. This was in 2011, but now there are many more people camped on the Libyan coast, waiting for their turn.

When I first heard that British politicians did not support a rescue operation in the Mediterranean, I thought it would be some far-right party saying that – I didn't realise it was the government's policy. It's a terrible decision. All of Europe has a responsibility to stop people from drowning. It's partly due to their actions in Africa that people have had to leave their homes. Italy is doing so much to help save refugees and it needs support. Countries such as Britain, France, Belgium and Germany think they are far away and not responsible, but they all took part in colonising Africa. Nato took

part in the war in Libya. They're all part of the problem.

It's also important to understand that our journey doesn't end when we reach land. After the helicopter found our boat, we were taken by an Italian ship to Lampedusa, where we were locked in a reception centre that looked like a prison. Then I was sent to a small town in southern Italy, and I was lucky to find a job sewing tents, but it paid so little I couldn't afford to live. Italy is in crisis, and millions of its own citizens have left to find work in northern Europe, so I thought I would do the same.

I went to Berlin. I was offered jobs, but I couldn't take them as I didn't have the right documents. The Dublin treaty means refugees are usually forced to stay in the country where they arrive. I ran out of money and ended up living on the street, at a camp where refugees were fighting for the right to live and work in Germany. The camp was a political place, and it motivated me. How is it that my life here is worse than under Muammar Gaddafi's dictatorship? I believe in democracy, but in Europe it seems there's democracy for some but not for others. We call our group Lampedusa in Berlin.

I've been lucky. In Berlin, I met my girlfriend and we now have a baby boy. He's three months old. When I look at him, I think about how I want him to live in a better world, and that he shouldn't have to face the things I have. When I set out on the journey from Tripoli, I had no idea how dangerous it would be. I had only been on a boat once before in my life. In fact, I can't even swim.



# refugee



■ Told to Daniel Trilling, whose reporting on refugees in Europe is at [trillingreal.tumblr.com](http://trillingreal.tumblr.com). This piece originally ran in Comment is Free (The Guardian), reprinted with permission.





# Ali Baba and the 300 hostages: the kidnappers who prey on desperate migrants in Europe's border badlands

In the 'Wild West' between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia, being beaten up and robbed is far from the worst that can happen. By *Ramita Navai*

IN THE HEAT of the midday sun, the fields and woodlands between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia look idyllic: birds sing, the grass is smudged with wild poppies, all seems quiet. But this picture of pastoral peace is, I'm afraid, an illusion. This is Greece's Wild West, a lawless and desperate place known as 'The Jungle', where people are beaten up every day.

'It's dangerous out there,' says the fat Greek policeman standing with me, just north of the village of Idomeni. Then he waddles back to his car.

The predators in this jungle are Afghan people-smugglers, their prey the poor migrants who have struggled here from all over Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The steady crunch of gravel that carries through the air with the birdsong grows louder as we approach a railway line. From here, I can see a biblical vision of flight: a continual flood of refugees who have travelled to Greece by dinghy from Turkey and are now heading for the conifer forests that disappear into the hills that encircle us. Men and women carrying babies, pulling their children, spurred onwards by poverty and war, faces scorched by the sun. A group of backpacked Syrians pick their way along the tracks. 'Goodbye Syria!' cries a young man, flicking a peace sign. In the distance there are more; a long line of them grinding along a road.

I walk towards the woodland. The migrants

are hidden from view in the shrub, but as the tall grass gives way to the trees, they become visible. Hundreds crouch in the vegetation. Most of them are bound for Germany or Austria. Some shelter in abandoned outhouses. The new arrivals are easy to spot, limping and shoeless, airing calloused feet swollen by days of walking. A woman exposes her toddler's little body, blanketed in red welts from the midges and mosquitos that descend in their swarms at dusk – along with the snakes.

At a clearing ahead, a charity's jeep pulls up, followed by a foreign TV crew. The camera rolls as medicine is distributed. And then I hear them, talking in Dari: the Afghan people smugglers.

Between dick jokes, they are discussing business: how many have you got? Who is going to cross tonight? These are the men the fat copper was afraid of, smugglers now posing as refugees in a queue for gauzes and pills. Migrants exploiting migrants: they are hard to spot at first. But soon you can pick them out from a distance – the swagger, the flamboyant hair, all undercuts and mohawks, the leather wristbands and the flashy trainers.

A Syrian man was shot in the head a few months ago when he resisted a robbery. Increasingly there are reports of rapes. A young Afghan jogs towards us gripping his head. A dribble of blood leaks from a gash on his cheekbone. His

face is bruised black. He says the Macedonian police beat him as he emerged from the other side of the forest. If it's not thieves, it is the police.

But I am looking for information about something more sinister than either: a kidnap ring said to be holding hundreds of migrants to ransom at a house in northern Macedonia. When I ask an Afghan smuggler about it, his stunned reaction and the looks that pass between him and his friends tell me that it is true. One of them takes me aside, ignoring the others urging him to shut up.

Every week, he says, hundreds of refugees are transported by freight train to a small farmhouse in a village called Vaksince, in northern Macedonia, where they are held for ransom. The operation started less than a year ago and is raking in hundreds of thousands of euros a month. The smuggler is talking to me because the ring is encroaching on his patch – twice already he has had to rescue 'clients' from the house, refugees who were kidnapped en route to Serbia. He describes the place in detail; conditions are so bad it looks like somewhere you would keep livestock, he says. The kingpin is an Afghan known as Ali Baba – real name Nusrat. But how can a bunch of Afghans set up shop in a village in Macedonia? 'Albanian Mafia,' he whispers.

Everything the smuggler tells me fits with what I already know. I'd met

Mohammed and Ahmed in Budapest. Best friends from Aleppo in Syria, they had made the same journey with a group of about 300 other refugees. After making it out of the jungle in Greece, they were loaded on to a wagon at Gevgelija station in Macedonia, near the Greek border. Several hours later the train stopped. Gasping for oxygen, the group stumbled out into the dawn air – and into the hands of about 50 men armed with batons and knives. They were forced to walk a few hours until they reached a house. For five days, Mohammed, Ahmed and the others were packed into a stinking, airless room; windows blacked out with bin liners. At night bodies piled on top of each other. The house was guarded at all times by Ali Baba's henchmen. Beatings were regular. Food was scarce. Syrians, assumed to be the richest, were charged the highest ransoms at €1,000 each. Those with no cash were forced to call their families for money or download the Western Union app on their phones and make transfers. Turnover was high – every few days a new batch of prisoners would be delivered to the house. Ali Baba threatened to kill anyone who did not pay.

Mohammed and Ahmed, who saw local Macedonian police working with the traffickers, used their phones to identify position of the house and to send pleas for help. They escaped one





Migrants being herded by people smugglers in Macedonia



morning during a battle between the police and Albanian mafia.

The battle lasted more than 30 hours, bombs and bullets ripping through bricks and concrete. At least 18 people were killed, including eight members of Macedonia's special forces. The authorities said they were fighting ethnic 'Albanian rebels', some of whom were wearing the uniform of the Kosovo Liberation Army, the ethnic Albanian rebel movement which fought for independence from Serbia – and had deep roots in organised crime.

Using the coordinates that Mohammed and Ahmed had given us, we drove to the house. As we approached, several Afghan guards appeared. A group of locals gathered around. They said they heard shouting from the house every night – they

had even called the police, who never turned up. A short Afghan in a black T-shirt who had darted up a hill started shouting instructions to his men from some bushes. The locals pointed at him and said: 'They call him Ali Baba.' When the guards began making phone calls, the locals became anxious and told us to leave. They feared the Afghans were calling the mafia – the real men in charge.

A couple of weeks later the Macedonian police raided that house. It had already been cleared, but hundreds of migrants were rescued from other houses. Fourteen people have been arrested so far – but there is no sign of Ali Baba.

His operation was a business that pumped a million euros a month, perhaps more, into criminal networks that spread across Europe, fuelled by corrupt

officials. 'Everyone knows what's going on. And nobody does anything, because they're all involved,' said an off-duty Greek civil servant. He named police, customs officials and railway workers in several European countries, accusing them of accepting bribes and tampering with seals on wagon doors to help traffickers transport their human cargo.

And that's the problem. The scale of the new trade in humans is so vast that it's engendering corruption through south and eastern Europe. Confusing and discriminatory laws on undocumented migrants – such as ones that bar them from taking public

transport – make them easy prey. While Europe is concentrating on how to keep desperate migrants out, organised crime syndicates are counting the cash as they expand their empires.

If Europe wants to help refugees, it must concentrate on fighting these criminal gangs. Attempts to stem the flow of migrants are not working – even the 110-mile fence that Hungary is now building along its border with Serbia will not keep them out.

As Ahmed said: 'I would do this journey again tomorrow. And again. A thousand times more. When there is nothing for you at home, nothing for you to lose, what else would you do?' ●

RAMITA NAVAI'S *City of Lies: Love, Sex, Death and the Search for Truth in Tehran* is out in paperback [www.ramitanavai.com](http://www.ramitanavai.com) | © ramitanavai. This article first appeared in the print edition of *The Spectator* magazine, reprinted with permission.



# Europe is beginning to sound like Australia on asylum

The worst thing it could do now is start to act like it, Ben Doherty writes.

Lam Binh was first. The self-taught sailor and four friends found Australia from Vietnam navigating with a single page torn from a school atlas.

The page went no further south than Timor: from there he was simply following a hand-drawn arrow on the bottom of the page. But on April 26, 1976 he sighted land, and piloted his battered junk, the Kien Giang, into Darwin harbour, where he dropped anchor and waited.

Lam had a speech prepared for the immigration officer who boarded the next morning: "Good morning. My name is Lam Binh and these are my friends from South Vietnam and we would like permission to stay in Australia". He'd learned some English. Language is important. Words matter.

The words of the government's response were equally important. Lam and his friends were granted asylum and as other compatriot asylum seekers began arriving, fleeing the same conflict and following similarly unlikely voyages, the government publicly declared it would "offer sanctuary" to those seeking asylum, promising the government's "full resources" would be made available to them.

"As a matter of humanity, and in accord with international obligations freely entered into, Australia has accepted a responsibility to contribute towards the solution of world refugee problems," the immigration minister said in newspaper reports.

Language is important. Words are powerful, especially when discussing people who have no voice of their own, no place in the debate, and whose identities are shaped by the words others use about them.

Lam Binh, of course, was not the first 'boat person' to arrive on Australia's shores unannounced.

\* \* \*

Australia's history is a history of people turning up on boats. From

aboriginal arrival, through European settlement and subsequent waves of migration, more than any other, arriving unannounced on a boat is the act that has defined Australia, shaped the country's character, and directed its development. Australia is, fundamentally, a nation of boat people.

Arriving unannounced in Australia by boat has made, for better or for worse, the nation of Australia. But no act is now more controversial, more contested, more confronting, than turning up at Australia's shoreline by sea.

In the decades since Lam Binh's arrival, the language used by Australian

## *Asylum seekers "could be murderers, could be terrorists"*

governments and media in discussion of people who arrive in Australia by boat has changed dramatically. Asylum seekers who arrive now in Australian waters are officially referred to in government statements as "illegals".

Ministers have publicly alleged asylum seekers "could be murderers, could be terrorists" and report "whole villages" are coming to Australia in uncontrollable "floods". Prime Ministers have condemned asylum seekers as opportunists who "jump the queue", and "throw their children overboard".

Discussion of Australia's policies regarding asylum seekers is now framed – through the media – as a matter of "border protection" from "threats to national security".

Policy measures such as "stopping the boats", it is insisted, must be conducted in secret as "if we were at war".

The language that is used now by governments to describe asylum seekers who arrive on their borders, is a demonstration of why the debate has become so polarised, so emotive, and so intractable.

The rhetorical evolution has been a tortuous one.

In the late 1970s, when the first post-colonial asylum seekers ("boat people") turned up on Australian shores fleeing conflict in Indochina, the then-immigration minister Michael MacKellar publicly welcomed them, drawing attention to their "harrowing" ordeals in their home country and promising "Australia would offer sanctuary".

He publicly read statements prepared by the asylum seekers, which asked Australia to "please help us for freedom".

The issue of asylum, MacKellar and then-foreign minister Andrew Peacock said in a statement, must not be politicised "because the basic question of human suffering involved transcends partisan advantage in an election context ... we will not risk taking action against genuine refugees just to get a message across".

"That would be ... utterly inhuman," they said.

As the 70s drew to a close, and as more boats continued to arrive, public unease with the arrivals began to grow louder. Echoing it, government rhetoric began to change.

Against the backdrop of the success of the Orderly Departure Plan – the multilateral UN-run program which, in 1979, began intercepting boat-borne asylum seekers in their first country of refuge and resettling them all over the world, including Australia – there emerged a sense that for people to turn up on boats was the "wrong" way of arriving.

It was improper if not unlawful, a "soft" invasion of a complacent Australia. New boat-borne arrivals began to be dismissed as "queue jumpers" and "economic migrants".

In the 1990s, the term "illegal" – previously used to describe a person who had overstayed a visa – was re-fashioned to refer to boat arrivals in the country (by now, coming from post-war Cambodia).

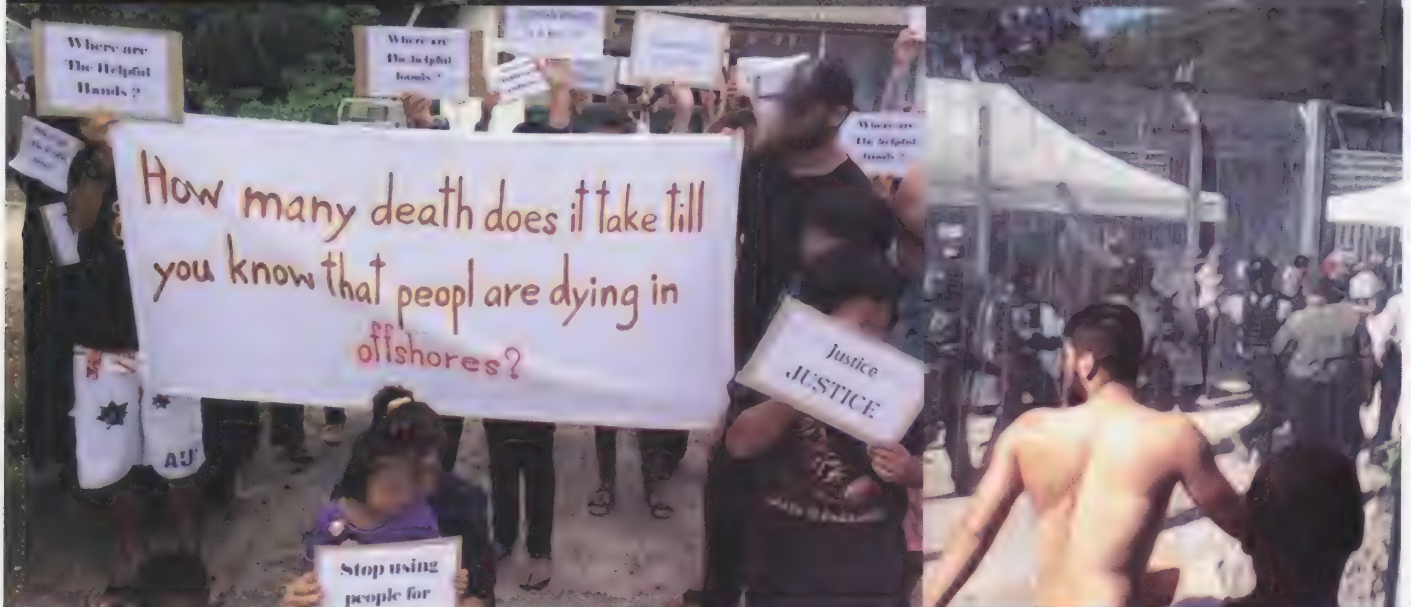
It was a crucial semantic shift.

Australia also saw the introduction





Treating Refugees as the problem is the problem - Refugee Rights Protest at Broadmeadows, Melbourne  
Photo: Takver from flickr







Five Christian leaders in Perth, calling for the release of the 135 children locked-up on Nauru and for an end to offshore detention. January 28, 2015  
Photo: Louise Coghill

of mandatory detention. Originally intended as a temporary policy for time-limited administrative detention, it has since been converted to a permanent policy involving indefinite detention.

Any boat-borne asylum seeker is now referred to as “illegal”. However, Australia is a party to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which affords any person the right to present to the country’s borders – by any means and without a visa – and claim asylum.

In 2001, asylum became terror. Within 48 hours of al-Qaida’s attack on the World Trade Centre, government ministers claimed terror groups were using asylum boats to infiltrate Australia.

Defence minister Peter Reith said unauthorised boats “can be a pipeline for terrorists”; parliamentary secretary Peter Slipper claimed “there is an undeniable link between illegals and terrorists”.

The government’s most senior security adviser, Asio (national security service) chief Dennis Richardson, dismissed the concerns as “extremely remote” and said he had “not seen evidence” of terror links – but the rhetoric remained, and consciously so.

The government was anxious to present those coming by boat as an undifferentiated mass (of potential terrorists), not as individual people; the defence department issued a diktat that “no personalising or humanising images” be taken of asylum seekers, lest they find their way into the public domain.

By 2013, the language of asylum had become conflated with that of war: the Australian government was “engaged in a war” with those organising boat journeys.

This became the justification for the government keeping secrets from its own people: “If we were at war we wouldn’t be giving out advice that is of use to the enemy, just because we have an idle curiosity,” Tony Abbott said.

\* \* \*

Australia is held up by some as an exemplar of how to deal with asylum seekers – and how to speak about them. The federal government is promoting itself as such. Abbott counselled in April that Europe must “urgently ... adopt very strong policies” like Australia’s.

What exactly is Australia offering? Australia’s avowal to stop the boats is untrue. The boats have not stopped, they are still coming, they are still being

### *Asylum seekers “throw their children overboard”*

stopped: 46 Vietnamese asylum seekers were intercepted at sea last month and secretly returned to Vietnam, some reportedly to detention; undenied allegations the crew of an asylum boat travelling to New Zealand were paid (in US dollars) by Australian officials to turn around; a boat forced back to Indonesia crashing and breaking up on a reef.

Offshore processing is mired in scandal – two deaths, including a murder, on Manus Island; allegations Australian workers raped a local woman and were spirited off home to escape prosecution; yet another parliamentary inquiry into child sexual assault and other abuses on Nauru.

And in onshore detention, healthcare failures, hunger-strikes, and deaths continue to plague a broken, benighted system.

All this, despite Australia only ever dealing with a fraction of the numbers of asylum seekers of European countries. Who would want to buy a suite of policies with these outcomes?

But the UK and Europe appear to be following the Australian lead.

Certainly, they are beginning to sound like Australia.

David Cameron’s “swarms of people” comment this month echoes Australian immigration minister Phillip Ruddock’s warnings years earlier of a “pipeline” of asylum seekers and of “whole villages” bound for Australia.

When Theresa May wrote that most of those on boats in the Mediterranean had come from Eritrea and Somalia as “economic migrants who’ve paid criminal gangs” she used the exact terminology of Australia’s foreign minister Bob Carr three years earlier, who dismissed Tamil asylum seekers as “a whole bunch of ... economic migrants”.

The EU, similarly, is adopting militaristic and secretive language to outline its response to irregular migration across the Med.

Leaked documents out of the EU show proposals for a “military operation” to “seek and destroy” boats and “disrupt the migrants smuggling business model”.

It is familiar rhetoric to those who’ve heard a succession of Australian government ministers propound a “military-led border security operation” to “disrupt the people smuggling trade”.

The Australian government has long refused to “comment on operational matters”. The EU is proposing an “information strategy” which includes no information at all: “rescue operations should not be publicised”.

This language is significant. By speaking in such a way, governments make a rod for their own backs, and are forced, by their own hand, into more and more punitive actions, to make the policies match the threat they’ve created.

Stoking domestic fears of disordered migration is electorally successful, but it leaves governments with few policy options.

By talking tough against asylum seekers – by abusing and dehumanising them, by casting their movement as some amorphous threat rather than a natural and rational human instinct – political leaders are doing nothing to solve the problem, and are only making it worse.

Europe is starting to sound like Australia on asylum: the worst thing it could do now is to start acting like it. ●

■ Guardian journalist Ben Doherty is a 2015 Thomson Reuters Fellow at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford. His paper, *Call me illegal: The semantic struggle over asylum in Australia*, can be read here: <http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/publication/call-me-illegal-0>



REFUGEE CRISIS — SPECIAL REPORT — GREECE

# Greeks fight to help refugees

From Rosa Roussou  
in Athens

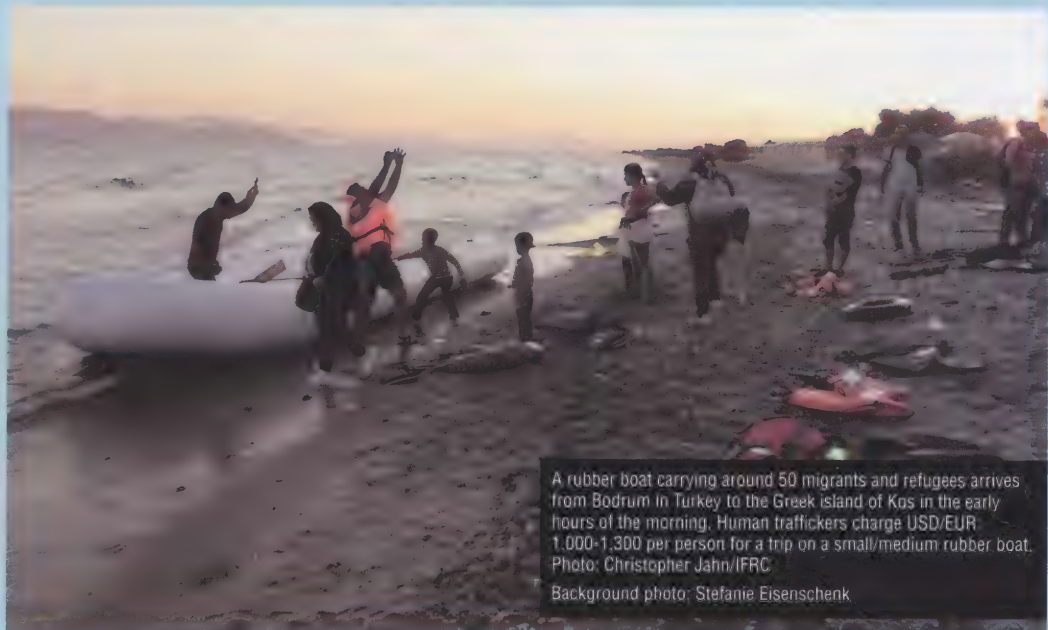
MY COUNTRY, Greece, is a now a central transit point in the unrelenting movement of refugee humanity across Europe.

It already faces one the most difficult economic situations in its history. Small businesses close down every day, salaries and pensions are dramatically decreasing every month and unemployment has reached enormous levels.

In this difficult period, we are experiencing the dubious privilege of being one of the first European countries that slave trade boats full of refugees daily approach.

People are leaving their homelands so they have a chance to live. They don't want to leave but they have to choose between death and life.

The whole world has preferred not to see what was happening in Syria. Now, everybody is talking about the refugee crisis but there was thunderous silence when the Assad regime was killing thousands of civilians with barrel bombs. As long as the "problem" was far away, our — not always comfortable — world pretended it didn't exist.



A rubber boat carrying around 50 migrants and refugees arrives from Bodrum in Turkey to the Greek island of Kos in the early hours of the morning. Human traffickers charge USD/EUR 1,000-1,300 per person for a trip on a small/medium rubber boat. Photo: Christopher Jahn/IFRC.

Background photo: Stefanie Eisenschank

In Greece, especially on our tourist destination islands, we are famed for our hospitality and we are doing our best to help those who come to us. The only thing left for them to depend on is our solidarity.

Without proper infrastructure but with our hearts open many volunteers and government agencies, along with non-profit organizations, are struggling to overcome their own problems and alleviate the sufferings of the refugees.

Greece is facing this refugee crisis with great bravery and composure. It isn't always easy. Resources are scant. We see conflicts among refugees

themselves and with police. And, of course, there is always worry among citizens about what happens after.

But right now Greeks are setting aside their own problems to cope with this appalling emergency. There are days when thousands of refugees arrive on our islands from the Turkish coast, having paid up to \$3,000 dollars, and conditions become ever more chaotic.

With minor exceptions, ordinary Greek people are confronting this humanitarian situation with great strength. We may not be able to show the rest of the world railway stations full of

toys but, to be honest, that is easier for wealthy nations than impoverished Greece.

Europe's real problems are bigger than the refugees and haven't shown their real size yet. The far right is lurking in the shadows. Waiting for it all to collapse.

We have the nazis of Golden Dawn. Their game is always the same: target a social group, isolate it and then you are free to attack it without any social reaction.

As a Greek Jewish woman, I can read the signs and want to tell everybody that we must never let "final solutions" happen again. That is why we must help the refugees. ●



■ ROSA ROUSSOU is a freelance arts worker and a member of the Jewish community in Athens





Refugees crisis:  
human tragedy  
unfolds at Budapest's  
Keleti station  
Photo: Eadaoin Flynn

# Budapest: refugee crossroads

Adam LeBor reports from Keleti Station

THE CHANT started slowly, then rose in volume: "Germany, Germany". On a blazing hot day in early September, thousands of refugees were camped out around Budapest's Keleti train station, marooned on their trek to western Europe. A line of riot police stood watching impassively, sealing off the entrance.

Keleti, an imposing 19<sup>th</sup> century ochre landmark, has become a major pressure point in Europe's ongoing migration crisis. This year, more than 150,000 people crossed the Hungarian-Serbian border, entry point to the Schengen Zone of visa-free travel across the European Union. Many have passed through Keleti.

Amar, a Syrian refugee, produced a train ticket to Hamburg for which he paid 207.12. But Amar, like all the thousands camped out in and around the station, was not going anywhere that day. All

trains to western Europe were cancelled and Amar said he was unable to obtain a refund.

"The Hungarian government stole my money," he said. "There is no train. We asked the police what is happening and they don't tell us anything."

Hungarian officials insist Europe's immigration system is broken and overloaded. Certainly Budapest's erratic response to events mirrors that of Europe as a whole.

A crowd gathered around the office of Migrant Solidarity, a volunteer network, waiting for water and food. Amar, 29, who had been stranded at Keleti for five days, after an arduous twenty day journey overland from Turkey, through Greece, Macedonia, Serbia and into Hungary, said: "There is no proper food, nowhere to sleep, no shower and it's cold at night."

A couple of days later the station forecourt was empty. After hundreds of refugees

started off on foot to Austria on September 4, Hungarian officials laid on buses to take them to the border. Austria opened its frontier and thousands of refugees streamed through on their way to Germany.

The crisis at Keleti, however, continues. Refugees are still camped out *inside* the station plaza. Municipal authorities and the volunteers have set up three transit zones to assist in the city's three main termini but the volunteers say they receive no help from the government. The mainstream churches, meanwhile, are conspicuous by their absence.

"The government is doing everything to make it difficult for us," said Gergely Komaromy, a volunteer. "They give us zero support and zero help. All the food, clothes, blankets and bedrolls are donated and the translators, the doctors and nurses are volunteers."

Municipal officials say they

are planning to open a new "social care zone" behind Keleti, with more organised facilities.

While many Hungarians have helped with donations and support, among the political elite there seems to be little sympathy for those stranded at Keleti. "Legitimate" refugees will be properly processed, but many of those arriving are economic migrants, say officials.

New laws passed by parliament now make it a criminal offence to cross the border illegally or damage the border fence with Serbia. Transit zones will be set up to process refugees and harsh penalties have been introduced for people smugglers.

ADAM LEBOR is an author and journalist based in Budapest. His thriller, *The Washington Stratagem*, is published by Head of Zeus.



## REFUGEE CRISIS --- SPECIAL REPORT --- AUSTRIA --- SWEDEN

## Austrian government shifts goalposts

From István Tóth in Vienna

AS AUSTRIAN citizens strive to provide maximum aid to the refugees crossing over from Hungary, Austria's coalition government has torn up its pledges to help and is planning to pull up the drawbridge.

The refugee crisis has aroused high emotions in Austria, which accepted waves of people in past decades whenever unrest hit the countries of the Soviet bloc as well as during the Balkan wars. In the current emergency, Austria and Germany agreed to allow the onward journey of refugees from Hungary into their countries.

On 5 September, Austrian chancellor Werner Faymann said that the crucial question

was whether Austria opens its border to the persecuted people or keeps it closed. "Austria," he said, "decided not to let the refugees down." Blasting Hungarian premier Viktor Orbán, he added that "those who seriously believe that barbed wire could solve the refugee issue and causing chaos are politically disqualified."

Over the weekend of 5/6 September, about 14,000 thousand crossed the Hungarian-Austrian border, of which around 12,000 have immediately gone further in the direction of Munich, which is now virtually a distribution hub for refugees.

Vienna's Westbahnhof has been crowded with hundreds of refugees, many boarding

the hourly trains to Salzburg. Despite more frequent departures towards Munich being arranged, more than one thousand refugees are staying in the Austrian border town of Nickelsdorf. About 2,000 people have been sent to refugee centres established in various Austrian provinces.

On 6 September, car convoy of Austrian volunteers drove to Budapest's Pope John Paul II Square near the city's Keleti railway station to pick up refugees. Lacking sufficient vehicles, preference was given to families and young people aged 18-25 were asked by the activists to go to Austria by train. Hundreds more are attempting to reach Austria on foot.

According to the poll by the Austrian daily *Kurier*, published on 6 September, 53% of Austrians accept that the refugees are fleeing from war-ravaged areas. Surprisingly, 28% would give asylum to a limitless number of refugees. 39%, however, would accept fewer than 80,000 asylum seekers a year and 54% consider the politicians' primary task as being to strengthen the EU's external borders.

Whatever the Austrian government does now, the crisis is far from over with hundreds of refugees still crossing from Serbia into Hungary even though Hungary has now made crossing its razor-wire border fence a criminal act.



The scene at Vienna's main station, Westbahnhof

## Surge in solidarity with refugees

Anna-Sofia Quensel writes for Expo

EARLY SEPTEMBER saw a surge in solidarity with refugees across Sweden by organisations ranging from NGOs to private initiatives. Fundraising, the collection of food, clothing and toys etc. has been energetically carried out.

All parties, with the exception of the far Sweden Democrats (SD) have in various ways expressed their solidarity and urge to help. The SD keeps on repeating that "we" cannot accept more "immigrants" and claim it is a matter of deciding whether to remain a welfare state or let more "immigrants" in.

Prime minister Stefan Löfven has presented a list of 10 proposals on refugee policy that the European Union should act upon. Among these, he suggests more legal

ways to enter Europe and safe countries, prioritising the saving of lives and combating people smuggling.

The Swedish public wants to see some action to help the refugees. People were appalled by the horrific photo of the little Alan Kurdi and are, in various ways, expressing their sympathy and solidarity with the refugees.

On 5 September, the Green Party's Youth organization staged a big demonstration in the centre of Stockholm. With the exception of the SD, the youth organisations of every political party took part and heard a supportive speech from Stefan Löfven. Police estimated the numbers taking part at 15,000.

Several anti-racist (Tillsammans) groups

are also active in their local communities, in Kungsbacka and Knivsta for instance, organising joint activities for newly arrived refugees and Swedes enabling them to get to know each other and build solidarity and support.

Meanwhile, the far rightists have been frantically using social media to spreading anything and everything to discredit the refugees and solidarity with them and raving about what they call "old media". Kent Ekeröth, an SD MP has been especially vile with his Tweets, claiming the refugees are not refugees, that they come from safe countries and the only reason they are coming to Sweden is to live on its welfare benefits.



## REFUGEE CRISIS --- SPECIAL REPORT --- NORWAY

# Norway warms to refugees

From Tor Bach for Vepsen in Oslo



Volunteers handing out food and drink to refugees outside the police immigration office in Oslo

MORE THAN 78,000 Norwegians have engaged in practical solidarity work for refugees arriving in the country during the last two weeks.

The wars in the Middle East and the dire situation in countries like Afghanistan and Eritrea have led to the increase in the number of refugees arriving to Norway.

This is against the background of a political atmosphere on the issues of refugees and immigration in Norway that has been utterly poisonous since the late 1980s, much of it thanks to the anti-immigrant Progress Party. Things did not really improve even after Anders Breivik's 22 July 2011 killing spree.

There was, therefore, no surprise at all when the Progress Party, in its local elections campaign, again played the immigration card as its poll forecasts pointed steadily southwards.

Meanwhile, even more

extreme utterances were spread all over the Internet with people making remarks about meeting refugees with war ships, machine guns and hand grenades.

Then, suddenly, newspapers started reporting on the bleak conditions at the reception area of Oslo's Police Immigration Office (PIO) where up to 100 refugees had to spend up to 24 hours in the waiting room without beds, showers or proper health care and food.

Responding, five local women started to cook food in their own kitchens and hand it out to the refugees. Then, restaurant owner Jan Vardøen declared that this was not acceptable and started to serve food from his restaurants, challenging other restaurants to do the same.

A Facebook group was set up to organise the work and people woke up, the group gathering more than 78,000 people – equivalent to 1.4% of

the country's entire population – in less than two weeks.

In a very short time, restaurants, hairdressers, clothes chains, bakeries, toys factories, book shops, doctors, nurses, taxi drivers, students, pensioners, young and old managed to gather veritable mountains of warm clothing, tooth brushes, sanitary napkins, medicine, food, toys for children and other necessities for refugees with hardly anything but the clothes on their backs on arrival.

A huge number of people are engaged on a daily basis outside the PIO in Oslo, handing out food and clothing and with nurses tending to medical needs.

Local initiatives have been set up to serve their local refugee centres, and all over the country, the centres now report being full stocked with clothes and toys.

What is going on is the biggest anti-racist

solidarity effort ever seen in Scandinavia.

In addition to the Facebook group, Refugees Welcome to Norway, that boasts 78,000 members, the Red Cross reports that it gets a new volunteer every five minutes while Norwegian People's Aid, the Norwegian Refugee Council and Save The Children all report about the same impact, both in people volunteering and money donated.

While the people act, the politicians seem strangely subdued. This is a popular movement they did not predict, and the "immigration iron triangle" – consisting of Labour, the Conservatives and the Progress Party – is trying to appear unaffected of what is going on.

It is still too early to say if this movement will maintain momentum. But, for sure, it is a political thaw and will hopefully herald a warmer political climate.



## REFUGEE CRISIS --- SPECIAL REPORT --- GERMANY

OPINION: *Time to learn German...?*

By Graeme Atkinson

The response of Germany to the enormous humanitarian crisis set ablaze by the mass migration of refugees from the war zones of Syria, Libya and Iraq has been the most enlightened and also, perhaps, the most astonishing of all the countries of the European Union (EU).

As the crisis went into overdrive in early September, Angela Merkel and her Christian Democrat-Social Democrat (CDU-SPD) coalition moved swiftly to open German's doors to the waves of refugees making the hazardous and exhausting trek, some of it dangerously seaborne, via Turkey, the Greek islands and mainland, Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary and Austria.

By the end of August, around 100,000 men, women and children had found sanctuary in Germany whose government then set out its stall to receive a further 700,000 to the year's end.

Chancellor Merkel firmly spelled out her government's stance: "As a strong, economically healthy country, we have the strength to do what is necessary."

It was a signal the huge numbers of ordinary German citizens already greeting, applauding and welcoming the refugees – and offering colossal material solidarity in the shape of food, clothing, toys for children and donations to aid charities – did not really need to hear.

This mass popular response was light years away from the dark days of the early 1990s when the presence of refugees and immigrants was blighted by much public hostility and a deluge of terror from the Nazis that brought with it arson and murder.

Then, too, the media had a different, certainly less world-open, view and much of the mood of hostility to asylum-seekers at the time was fashioned by the endless anti-foreigner screeching of German's biggest-selling paper, *Bild*.

Then, it sold 4 million copies a day and was the trumpet

and opinion moulder for everything that was backward in German society: tough on law and order, hostile to the left, xenophobic, sensationalist and borderline pornographic. It made *The Sun* look like the *Church Times*.

Today, its paid circulation is down to 2.5 million but it is still influential. Its posture is also different, at least towards refugees, as demonstrated by its front page of 29 August displaying a photograph of two refugee children with the main headline "We help".

Nobody sane would say that *Bild* is undergoing a sea change but the contrast with the spiteful, mean-spirited, racist-undertoned cover that adorned the UK's *Daily Express* the same day is palpable.

Since 29 August, *Bild* has campaigned extensively and effectively to raise funds to support the refugees and deserves our praise. Its position mirrors society's enormous support backing for the refugees.

Opposing are only right-wing conservatives, open fascists and that sad element in the German left that, generally, abstains from getting its hands dirty, resents mass action and is almost willing the movement behind the refugees to fail so it can return to its suspicions that all Germans are really mass exterminationists in *mufti*.

The appalling plight of the refugees has touched a raw nerve among ordinary Germans. In a poll for the German public broadcaster ARD, 88% said they would donate money or clothes to refugees or have already done so, while

67% said they would volunteer to help.

Only 33% of those polled said Germany should take fewer refugees.

Venting their ignorant rage against the depth of the tide of civil solidarity, meanwhile, Germany's diminished fascist scene has resorted to what it does best: violence – torching refugee centres in a desperate bid to intimidate refugees and their supporters alike. Nobody has been murdered. Yet.

Genuine anti-fascists used to being at the sharp end welcome the way German police, rail workers and football fans among countless others have taken this issue to heart, acting in a way that embodies the rich German word *solidarisch* but that is disparaged by miserable sceptics as "welcome culture".

Indeed, it was the football fans that sparked the movement with their display of massive "Refugees welcome" banners in the stadia of some of Germany's top-flight teams, including Borussia Dortmund and Bayern München, which is donating US \$1.1 million to refugee projects. (Real Madrid is doing the same in Spain.)

They are part of that steady 60% of Germans who support taking in refugees. The horrific pictures of Alan Kurdi that, incidentally, *Bild* removed after protests, have only galvanised the effort.

Comparison of the British government's response to the crisis with Germany is risible. Do the maths: Germany so far, 100,000 refugees accepted. The Britain of Cameron, Osborne, the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mail* so far, 280!

Then, there is the future: Germany, 800,000 in all *this year*. The UK – over the next five years, hedged with every kind of caveat and all manner of "ifs" and "buts", just 20,000.

Backing this is a UK media – BBC's Radio 5 Live is a major culprit – scratching around miserably in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Serbia and Greece for negative stories that can bolster the tawdry, racist policies of Cameron and Osborne. Whose agenda are the media working to? And, where was the Labour Party until early September, by the way?

Maybe it's time we started "learning German"...





# Victim turned perpetrator

Central and Eastern Europe turn their backs to the refugee crisis, by Elisabeth Pop

TUESDAY, 1ST SEPTEMBER... Breaking News on Romania's most popular TV channel, Antena3... Victor Ponta, Romania's prime minister, presents himself on camera to reassure the population that everything is being done to address the "migrant crisis" and stress that the claim that Romania would have to take in 7,000 refugees is just "a rumour".

Facts, both on Romania's obligations as part of the European Union (EU) and those relating to the cause and dimension of the worst humanitarian crisis since WWII, are hard to come by.

While the Romanian interior ministry was calculating that the country could accommodate up to 1,700 refugees, Traian Basescu, a former Romanian president who managed to see off two impeachment procedures, declared on TV that Romania, "a Christian Orthodox country", should not take in any migrants. His statements were duly plastered across the Romanian mass media and the public mood seems to support him – if "vox pops" in Bucharest's busy market places are any measure.

It was not just that the country does not have the financial resources and facilities to accommodate them, he argued, but because once they are settled "they will then bring their families and many will not want to be integrated".

"They are not our problem. If I was still President I would... close the borders," said the former head of state. He also added that, while being moved by the drama of the "genuine refugees", the public mood and his own experience tell him that, this time, the national interest must prevail.

Currently under investigation in two major lawsuits – one for corruption and the other for using undue influence to facilitate the kidnapping of three Romanian journalists in Iraq in 2005 – the same Basescu was recently implying publicly that most Muslims are "terrorists".

In the wider context, the refugee crisis has reached Romania at the worst time possible: a nation-defining moment, when the Turkish government donated \$3 million US and the authorities made available a 10,000 square metres plot of abandoned land for the construction, in Bucharest, of what was, wrongly,

dubbed the biggest mosque and pan-Muslim madrasa (one hosting Sunni, Shia and Sufi students and scholars alike) in the EU.

The construction of the mosque has been postponed, but not before politicians across the spectrum rode the populist wave. And, otherwise reputable and mainstream historians, philosophers and political scientists have joined Basescu in making apocalyptic claims that madrasas are a well-known breeding ground for terrorists that, in this case, will offer ISIS free passage into the heart of Europe.

They also suggest that with only a 70,000 strong Muslim population across the country (10,000 of whom live in Bucharest), Romania does not need and should not allow the biggest mosque in Europe to be built on its territory.

They also level accusations of betrayal of the national interest and our "ancestors who fought for our Christian faith and Romanian culture and managed to keep them away from Vienna's gate once" only for the current left-wing government to let them in through the front door.

Even the Romanian far right got a sufficient boost to organise marches and petitions to block the mosque's construction and settlement of any refugees.

Its strident calls to save the "Christian, national character of Romania" was advertised, repeatedly and without

hesitation, by some Christian Orthodox clerics on their personal social media.

Some commentators argue that the far right is behind the actions of Catalin Berenghi, a Bucharest resident, who buried two pig carcasses in the ground where the mosque is supposed to be built while letting five other live swine, painted with the Romanian flag, roam, sleep and defecate on the land, in a clear attempt to deconsecrate the site. After the pigs left, a one-ton cross was clandestinely erected in the middle of the plot.

And all this, despite the fact that Romania has had little more than 2,000 refugees in the country, according to Eurostat, most of them fleeing from war in Iraq and Syria. Last year, it responded positively to fewer than half of the applications it received – 775 – while, in the first quarter of 2015, it received 355 applications, 10 times fewer than Bulgaria (3,220), 100 times fewer than Hungary (33,550) and will most likely receive 2,250 times fewer than Germany (800,000).

Romania is not the only country in the region to oppose any significant resettlement plans and to surrender to extreme rhetoric and reactions.

Meeting in Prague on 4 September, the prime ministers of Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic stressed that, in view of the unfolding humanitarian crisis, they would take in some refugees but rejected any quotas and criticised the EU for not prioritising the policing of its external borders.





Just a few months ago, most of these countries did not want any refugees at all or just Christian ones. Slovak interior ministry spokesman, Ivan Netik, said Muslims would not be accepted because "Slovakia does not have a mosque and they would not be able to integrate". Even if since, Slovakia has agreed to also settle Muslim refugees, Robert Fico, the Slovak premier, still defends the initial approach, denying the move was never discriminatory but was intended to ensure community cohesion. The government of Polish prime minister Ewa Kopacz and Polish public opinion echo his attitude.

Meanwhile, in the Czech Republic, the police have arrested refugees, most of them Syrians, trying to make their way to Austria. In scenes that raised a justified outcry from human rights activists, the Czech authorities used marker pens to write numbers on the forearms of 214 refugees, a move that even the UK-based, anti-immigration think tank Migration Watch condemned.

Estonia has for a long time taken a very strict stance on refugee policy, refusing to be part of the UN Refugee Agency's displacement programmes and rejecting calls for any solidarity within the EU. At the other end, Bulgaria, a country struggling to cope with massive arrivals of Syrian refugees via Turkey, feels angry and overlooked after the decision that only Italy and Greece would benefit from relocation schemes.

Central and Eastern European countries are not alone in their attitudes. On 1 September, Mariano Rajoy, the Spanish prime minister, stood alongside Angela Merkel in Berlin and flatly rejected German suggestions for a new system of binding quotas for refugees spread across the EU. "Some countries don't want refugees," he said. "You can't force anyone [to take them]." Ireland, Britain, France, Spain, Portugal and Finland are all expected to offer refuge to fewer people than talks held in May between the 28 EU member states suggested would be their fair share.

In the past 11 years, millions of people from Central and Eastern Europe have moved to Western Europe in search of a better life, and some, to escape discrimination and oppression.

Be they refugees, asylum seekers

or economic migrants, many of these Central and Eastern European nationals were confronted with xenophobia and, sometimes, even violence by the media, the politicians and sections of the population, in those Western countries they so longed to reach.

When they were called – almost daily – "criminals", "scroungers" or "slags" that steal jobs, houses and school places and clog the hospital emergency departments of Western Europe, the governments of their home countries legitimately shouted about "racism", "xenophobia" and the violation of EU rights.

Now, victims have turned perpetrators. Whether from a strong

sense of history, a perceived threat to national identity or realistic economic and social pressures, countries across Central and Eastern Europe seem set to fail miserably the biggest humanitarian test of our generation.

They are no longer the "other", the West was warning against. Now they too have joined the ranks of the bullies, the bigots and the scaremongers.

The new "other" is even poorer than them, mostly non-White and non-Christian. A sad and terrible episode in the history of Europe, that will most likely fuel anti-immigration, anti-EU sentiment and test the whole EU project itself, is now under way.



(above) Traian Basescu, a former Romanian president declared "a Christian Orthodox country", should not take in any migrants. Photo: President of the European Council

(left) Protested in Bucharest against a proposed mosque



Refugee camp in northern Iraq



# FLEEING TERROR

Joe Mulhall comes face to face with those who have fled Syria

“WOULD YOU like a coffee?” Before I could say “No”, the aid worker accompanying me turned and said, “Always say yes. It’s the only thing they have left to offer you.”

We were in the tent of a family of Syrian refugees living in Kawergosk, a camp holding some 10,000 people in Northern Iraq, perilously close to Mosul, the front line with ISIS.

To my surprise, the tent, onto which they had built a second room from wood and tarpaulin, was relatively spacious, housing a TV, cooker and fridge. On my way to the tent, I had walked down a bustling shopping street with food, clothes, paraffin gas stove, hairdressers, electrical goods stores and even foreign exchange stands.

This was not the image I had had in my head of a refugee camp. At first, the family’s tent, with its concrete floor and electricity, did not seem so bad. But, then it struck me: this family was never going home.

Just months before, they owned a house and all the things in it, had cars and had jobs, friends and lives. It had all been taken from them. This two-roomed tent was now all they possessed in the world and the only thing they could offer me, their guest, was coffee.

While the concrete being poured to make the bases of the new tented area marked progress – winter was coming and the camp sat at the bottom of a large hill meaning any rain would flood the camp and wash away the mud floors – it also put the permanence of this camp into stark reality.

It was no surprise then that when I asked the family what they most wanted most, the father replied “Work” and the children said “More school”.

While they had done everything they could to make themselves as comfortable as possible, their lives were on hold and they wanted to restart them as soon as possible.

Sadly, this family was one of the luckier ones. Many of the camps were in a far worse condition, without electricity and with little or no proper sanitation making outbreaks of disease and diarrhoea a constant threat.

With the formal refugee camps bursting at the seams, many thousands had to make do with makeshift cover in derelict buildings.

The town of Zakho was littered with informal sites where families lived in desperate conditions, often open to the elements: in summer, the baking heat and, in winter, the snow and cold.

Of course, even in the best-equipped camps, conditions could be dangerous. Like any conurbation of thousands of people there was crime and prostitution.

Some desperate people sought desperate measures. Tent fires were another major fear, with the paraffin stoves exploding and immolating the highly

flammable tents in seconds.

Jalal, a Yazidi refugee, who had spent nine days stranded on a mountaintop before making his way across the border into Iraqi Kurdistan, told me how he had seen five tent fires claim the lives of three children and one woman at Khanke camp just outside the city of Duhok.

Understandably, with such dangers many of the refugees talked of hoping to leave the country and make their way to Europe and some had family and friends who had already made the hazardous journey.

As Mirna, a beaming nine-year-old girl living in a portakabin in the abandoned Ainkawa Mall, told me: “I want to go to Germany to live with my grandmother.”

Thinking back to that dark and cavernous abandoned concrete mall, with poor sanitary conditions, no school and her uncomfortable bed on the floor, I just hope Mirna got her wish. ●



# Ex-star Boniek leads football hate campaign

By **Rafal Pankowski** for NEVER AGAIN Association in Warsaw

A STORM of accusations over football racism hit the Polish media and society in early August.

The flashpoint for the row was the punishment by UEFA of Polish champions Lech Poznan for the display of a nazi banner by its fans at a recent Europa League game in Sarajevo. The banner contained the motto "The Blood of Our Race", a quote from a song by the notorious Polish nazi rock band Konkwista 88.

The match was played on 14 July and UEFA's sanctions – a 50,000 Euro fine and Lech Poznan's next European game to be played in an empty stadium – were announced three weeks later. Lech Poznan has been disciplined for similar offences in previous seasons.

Instead of issuing a forthright condemnation of racism, the chairman of the Polish Football Association (PZPN), Zbigniew Boniek, decided to blame the anti-discrimination FARE network and the NEVER AGAIN Association for their alleged role in reporting the banner and launched a public campaign against "snitches" and "spies" via his Twitter account which has almost 300,000 followers.

For example, he posted a photo of a NEVER AGAIN Association member, Jacek Purski. Comments in response to this from Boniek's followers included, for example: "Stop thinking and smash his mouth", "sometimes euthanasia is the best option" or "no more births of such creatures" as well as countless other hostile and threatening messages.

The next Boniek post included a link to an article on a far right website entitled

"Red louse and commie spy Jacek Purski" and ending with the sentence "I just hope somebody will kick his ass properly."

Another posting by Boniek, taken from another far-right website which in its mission statement said it was concerned with the "preservation of the white race", attempted to smear NEVER AGAIN.

Currently Italy-resident Boniek, considered one of the greatest Polish footballers of all time, was a teammate of top UEFA official Michel Platini at Juventus in the 1980s. He is now a powerful figure in both Polish and international football and he has become especially popular among radical right-wing football fans.

His latest comments have created a storm in the Polish media, several mainstream journalists pointing out the incredible scandal of his behaviour that flagrantly undermines UEFA's efforts to eliminate racism from European football.

Leading sports journalist, Michal Kolodziejczyk, expressed his indignation at Boniek's actions in an article titled "Boniek is looking for blood". Kolodziejczyk stated that Boniek's series of tweets breached the dignity of his official position as Polish FA President. A renowned journalist of Polish Radio One, Dominik Panek, meanwhile, wrote: "I hope no serious acts of violence will happen as a result in the near future."

Also a big article by two top sports writers in the main national daily *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Rafal Stec and Michal Szadkowski, bore the title: "Boniek is inciting" and stated: "It is not even about decency - that has been scarce



Racist banner (centre) of Lech Poznan fans. Photo from the NEVER AGAIN Association archives

in our football for decades. It is about responsibility. With each tweet reaching an enormous mass of people, the PZPN chairman has incited hatred against a man who did not issue the judgment against Lech or any other club."

Reacting to Boniek's smears, the London-based FARE network expressed "its concern about what appears to be a campaign of vilification by a senior representative of the Polish FA of FARE member group Never Again and of the work of our network." It added: "Comments by the President of the PZPN, Zbigniew Boniek, posted on his Twitter account in reaction to a sanction imposed by UEFA on KKS Lech Pozna go beyond the acceptable terms of legitimate debate about issues of discrimination and are not in keeping with the position of the President of the Polish FA.... It is clear that Never Again have been picked out because of their work in the area of tackling racism and far-right activity in football." The FARE statement also said that "recriminations of this kind by senior people in football should stop immediately."

The credentials of the "NEVER AGAIN" Association in the field of combating

racism in sports and beyond are, in fact, very well known. It has existed as an officially registered organisation since 1996 and functions as the Polish sister organisation of HOPE not Hate.

For many years it has conducted the "Let's kick racism out of the stadiums" campaign – the first such initiative in Eastern Europe and is determinedly committed to breaking the silence and raising awareness of the problem of racism and xenophobia. The wide-ranging activity of "NEVER AGAIN" has achieved broad national and international recognition and an emphatic endorsement from Michel Platini himself.

Together with FARE, "NEVER AGAIN" implemented the UEFA EURO 2012 *Respect Diversity – Football Unites* programme. As a result, major educational and awareness-raising activities took place before and during the European Football Championships in Poland and Ukraine.

Boniek, however, remains unrepentant, ignorantly mocking his critics on his Twitter account and posting a message saying "My response to FARE: maybe I will answer you when you learn Polish. Who asks your opinion anyway?"



**D**onald Trump, the super-rich tycoon with the mad haircut, is trying to capsize the American political system.

With his flamboyant public pronouncements and a willingness to say whatever worms its way into his mind, the brash New York billionaire has found himself leading the polls with a groundswell of support – even from white nationalists.

Trump's candidacy comes at a very key time. The Supreme Court's legalization of same-sex marriage and moves by Southern states to remove the Confederate Battle flag from government property have created a vacuum for a right-wing populist candidate.

He was on hand to fill the void to give an answer to the sense of rage growing on the radical right and his willingness to speak up about issues dear to the white nationalist cause and his challenge to the two-party system are what many white nationalists find most appealing.

Trump set the tone for his campaign in June when he declared at his candidacy announcement: "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're sending people that have lots of problems and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists."

Two weeks later, when asked about these comments, he claimed they were "entirely accurate." The comments resulted in a number of television and commercial partners ending their business relationship with the billionaire, but he does not care.

Trump's public displays of misogyny are also routine. Following the first Republican debate, Trump vilified debate moderator and Fox News host Megyn Kelly for her perceived demeanour towards him, claiming she must have been menstruating. Trump was barred from attending a large and important Republican gathering in Atlanta following this latest sexist remark.

Trump's outbursts on immigration echo those of conservative mouthpiece Ann Coulter who wrote an entire book demonising immigrants – *Adios, America: The Left's Plan To Turn Our Country Into A Third World Cesspool* – published a few weeks before Trump's campaign announcement.

In an interview about the book, Coulter told prominent Mexican-American TV host Jorge Ramos that Mexican culture is "deficient" and went on claim that part of Mexican culture includes "uncles raping their nieces."

These ugly, not to say sinister,

# DONALD TRUMP

## The dark horse that became the right's white charger

Eric O'Neill in Washington DC

Photo: Gage Skidmore

comments, coupled with the murder of a woman in San Francisco by a suspected undocumented immigrant, brought the issue of immigration to the forefront once again.

At the first Republican candidates' debate held at the beginning of August, Trump declared, that if it were not for him, nobody would be talking about that issue. He may be correct,

but a platform based on bigotry and xenophobia is likely to go nowhere come election time.

Sadly, Trump's comments are hardly new in American politics or even new for the man himself, as recent major New York Times investigation piece detailing his long history of bigotry has exposed.

Though they realize he is not "one of them," the hardcore right in America





have backed Trump in part due to his comments on immigration but also because he represents a threat to the established two-party system in American politics, a system white nationalists would love to see brought to its knees.

Gregory Hood, an avid white nationalist writer, wrote a piece in support of Trump for the Radix blog, a

website and magazine started by white nationalist Richard Spencer. Hood wrote: "Trump is worth supporting. He is worth supporting because we need a troll. We need someone who can expose the system that rules us as the malevolent and worthless entity it is. We need someone who can break open public debate. We need someone who can expose and heighten the contradictions

within the system. And we need someone who can call out the press, the politicians, and the pseudo-intellectuals as the empty shells they are."

Brad Griffin, founder of the white nationalist Occidental Dissent website, echoed Hood's comments in a recent piece on Trump, writing, "Donald Trump isn't a conservative or a racist by any stretch of the imagination, but he is a tornado that can inflict a lot of damage upon the two-party system."

"Trump is 'divisive' in that he forces his opponents and rivals to take sides. In this case, he demonstrated that the other GOP candidates are interchangeable cowards and conformists," Richard Spencer wrote, praising Trump for his outspoken comments, in a piece last month on the Radix website.

Jared Taylor, one of the most influential white nationalists and founder of the racist journal *American Renaissance*, has also praised Trump for his views on Mexicans.

"Americans, real Americans have been dreaming of a candidate who says the obvious, that illegal immigrants from Mexico are a low-rent bunch that includes rapists and murders," Taylor said in a video posted on his *American Renaissance* website.

Members of the White Genocide Project, a white nationalist group formed to raise awareness of the "genocide" of white people around the world, has even started a White House petition calling on President Obama to honour Trump for "opposing white genocide."

The most established white nationalist political party in the US, the American Freedom Party (AFP), is running a Presidential candidate in 2016 on an explicitly racist platform, but it is Donald Trump, not Robert Whitaker, that most prominent white nationalists are supporting.

With fifteen months to go until the election on November 8, 2016, it is difficult to predict where Trump will be when all of the votes are counted.

He certainly has the money to sustain his campaign, even if the Republicans (GOP) do not choose him as their nominee. With two Presidential losses in a row, 2016 is a massive election for the GOP.

The party would do well to take a lesson from recent history. In 2012 and 2008, minority voters had a huge impact on the election outcome meaning the GOP's failure to reach out to Latinos, African Americans and others cost the party dear. Trump's xenophobia and sexism is going to do little to improve its chances. ●



# Is Hungary run by the radio

By Cas Mudde

LAST MONTH, Hungarian premier Viktor Orbán gave arguably the most significant radical right-wing speech in Europe for decades.

To those unfamiliar with European politics, this statement may not mean much, while those more or less familiar with European politics may be confused by it. After all, Orbán is the leader of the Hungarian Civic Party – Fidesz – a party considered “conservative” rather than “radical right” by the vast majority of academics and pundits. In fact, the latter label is almost exclusively used for another party in the country, the Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik).

In recent years, Orbán has made many high-profile statements that go well beyond contemporary European conservatism. For example, earlier this year he called for the reintroduction of the death penalty and for the building of “work camps” for immigrants. And his words are often followed by no less controversial actions. For instance, Hungary has started building a 109-mile long fence with Serbia to keep immigrants out.

On top of that, he declared last summer that “liberal democratic states can’t remain globally competitive” and acknowledged that he wants to transform Hungary into an “illiberal democracy.” The tail was wagging the dog here, as Orbán and his party have been busily undermining liberal democracy in Hungary ever since returning to power in 2010.

And then there was the speech at the 26th Bálványos Summer Open University and Student Camp in July, in which Orbán said: “The question now is not merely what kind of Europe we Hungarians would like to live in, but whether Europe as we now know it will survive at all. Our answer is clear: we would like Europe to remain the continent of Europeans... We want to preserve Hungary as a Hungarian country.” Despite all this, the vast majority of experts and journalists continue to classify Fidesz as a conservative rather than as a radical right party.



"Hungarians won't live according to the commands of foreign powers," Orbán told the crowd at Kossuth square, 15 March 2012  
Photo: Derzsi Elekes Andor

Fidesz, which originated from within the democratic mainstream, has a liberal-conservative party name, and is firmly entrenched in centre-right transnational party federations like the European People's Party (EPP). Its electorate is more similar to the centre-right than to radical right parties:

The former normally attract more highly educated and well-to-do voters while the latter attract a more male, old and working-class electorate. Finally, in its official election manifestos, Fidesz largely steers clear of openly radical rightist policies and statements.

But to understand Fidesz's actual ideology, we must look not just at its statements and supporters, but also at its actions. Many commentators argue that Orbán uses radical right statements for electoral purposes too fight off the electoral challenge of the radical right Jobbik.

But can a party really take radical positions that are “just strategic” for most of its existence? And does it still matter whether Fidesz is a radical right

party or a party that *uses* radical right policies and rhetoric? The answer: yes and no.

Which is a bigger threat: a radical right party on the fringe, or a mainstream party that enacts radical right policies? The difference between the radical right as an ideology, on the one hand, and as a strategy, on the other, can be exposed with a simple question: Would Hungary change fundamentally if Jobbik rather than Fidesz was in power?

The answer is yes. Although Jobbik is campaigning with a more moderate image than Fidesz, there is no doubt that Jobbik would implement some fundamentally different policies in key areas.

Jobbik would almost certainly make Hungary leave, rather than just criticize, the European Union, and would align the country more openly with Vladimir Putin's Russia. It also would seriously undermine the rights of minorities in Hungary, most notably Jews and Roma.

Still, Fidesz is a bigger radical right threat, for three reasons.

First, radical right “politics” are



# cal right?



Viktor Orbán

own countries, such as within the bureaucracy and judiciary, and beyond.

Orbán can get away with his illiberal policies because internal divisions have rendered his domestic opponents impotent while he is sheltered from international pressure by friends in powerful places, not least in the EPP, the dominant political group in the European Union, of which Orbán was one of the vice-presidents from 2002 until 2012.

Despite all his controversial policies and statements of past years, EPP President Joseph Daul, recently said, "Orbán is the *enfant terrible* of the EPP family, but I like him." And so the EPP frustrates EU attempts to sanction Hungary, even though Hungary is in flagrant violation of some EU regulations. For instance, last year the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Hungary's Church Act of 2012 breached freedom of religion.

The situation of Fidesz and Hungary is extreme and unique, at least for the moment, but anyone academically or politically concerned with liberal democracy can draw broader lessons from this example.

Most importantly, liberal democracies are threatened not just by illiberal parties but also by mainstream parties implementing illiberal policies and by the domestic and foreign actors that enable them.

While people committed to democracy should remain vigilant about the radical right and the more violent extreme right, they should realise that mainstream parties are responsible for almost all of the illiberal policies that actually get implemented.

Even if they do this to ward off a real or perceived radical right challenger, it is still the mainstream party that decides to implement illiberal policies rather than fend off the electoral challenge with liberal policies.

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not limited to radical right "parties." Just as (nominally) social democratic parties and politicians (such as Tony Blair in the United Kingdom) can implement neoliberal policies, conservative (and other) parties can propose and even introduce (populist) radical right policies – policies informed by xenophobic nationalism, authoritarianism and populism.

Second, although Jobbik is more ideologically radical right, it is in opposition and Fidesz is in power. Few governments in Western democracies include radical right parties. In those that do, the radical right party is almost always a junior party.

Finally, mainstream parties such as Fidesz may, in some ways, be more harmful for liberal democracy than radical right parties such as Jobbik because they often have the experience, power and skills to implement illiberal policies.

Also, mainstream parties tend to have supporters in important political positions both within their

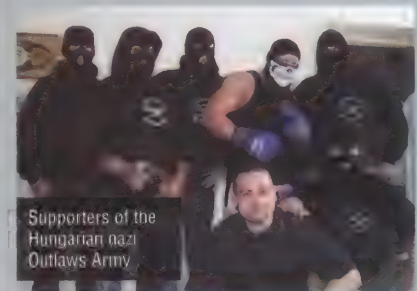
## Jobbik turns anti-Muslim

FROM ISTVÁN TÓTH IN BUDAPEST

THE SUPPOSED friendship between the far right Jobbik and the Hungarian Islamic Community (HIC) seems to be ending. Imam Ahmed Miklós Kovács, vice-chairman of the HIC, said in early August 2015: "Years ago, we Muslims did not have any problems with the extreme right and its Hungarian Guards". In fact, in 2010, many Muslims in Hungary voted for Jobbik because party leader Gábor Vona declared Islam "the last hope of mankind".

There was even a strong Palestinian, Turkish, Uyghur and Iranian sympathy with Jobbik whose party delegations regularly went to Iran, Iranian businessmen reciprocating.

Today, the ties between HIC and Jobbik are loosening and the Muslims graduating to the position of Jobbik's main enemy. According to Imam Kovács, Jobbik's somersault is clearly connected to the migration situation. New waves of migration are a big issue for Hungary, the country turning into a major transit route for migrants from the Middle East via Greece. In the last six months alone, a reported 71,200 migrants entered the country.



In response, the Hungarian nazi Outlaws Army, formed in 2008, is hunting down refugees on the Hungarian-Serbian border to physically attack them while the Budapest government is erecting a four-metres high anti-migrant fence running the length of the 109-mile border between the countries.



# PURPLE RAIN

## PUTTING UKIP UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

# Purple Depression

**Simon Cressy asks, where has UKIP gone?**

IN THE SIX months leading up to the May 2015 elections, UKIP and its leader Nigel Farage were constantly on our TV screens and permanent fixtures in the press.

Little more than six months later, the story is a very different one. UKIP appears to have gone missing, despite a long list of bad news stories.

UKIP has suffered a number of setbacks, yet the national media seem less than willing to report on anything to do with the xenophobic party now the election period is over.

The two big success stories for the party in May were undoubtedly the local election results in Thanet and Tendring, yet internal strife has blighted both UKIP branches.

In May, UKIP took control of Thanet council, its first district council after winning 33 seats, 15 more than the Conservatives in second place.

Just three months later, four of the UKIP councillors – Helen Smith, Beverley Martin, Ash Ashbee and Konnor Collins – called for leader Chris Wells to resign following claims that he had become a liability.

A statement released by the rebels argued the group had “become increasingly alarmed at what we see as

the dictatorial and often unpredictable behaviour of the current Thanet council leadership”.

The dispute arose after Wells sacked cabinet member Helen Smith over a disagreement about plans for the council to make a compulsory purchase order for the now-closed Manston Airport.

The rebel group have announced, though, that they have no intention of breaking away from the main UKIP group on Thanet council but UKIP has a habit of clamping down hard on dissent as can be seen further north on the Essex coast.

In May, UKIP won 19 seats on Clacton's Tendring Council, adding to the three they already had. That left them just one seat short of being the largest party.

Within a month of their victory, war erupted with two factions of UKIP at each other's throats after a split occurred following a disagreement over working with the Conservative councillors; a disagreement that saw Mick Skeels, leader of the UKIP group quit his post just a week into the job.

Skeels and his rebels wasted no time and quickly formed the breakaway “Tendring UKIP” or “TenUKIP” group. The TenUKIP group initially had

nine of the UKIP councillors listed as supporters whilst the remaining thirteen stayed loyal to the mainstream pro-Farage faction of UKIP.

The situation escalated, however, when supporters of the pro-Farage group distributed leaflets in Clacton that attacked the TenUKIP group, accusing them of betrayal and being untrustworthy.

This criticism fell on deaf ears and the TenUKIP group formed a new council administration with the Conservatives and Independents, with two of the TenUKIP rebels given portfolios in the new ruling cabinet.

At the start of June, four of the rebels returned to the main UKIP group after a period of bullying and veiled threats from UKIP's HQ. The remaining five – Mick Skeels Sr, Mick Skeels Jr, John Hughes, Anne Poonian and John Chittock – were suspended from the party.

A week later, Len Sibbald, one of the original nine rebels packed in as a UKIP councillor, triggering a by-election and claiming he had been gullible and naive and had let the electorate down.

UKIP narrowly managed to cling onto Sibbald's Rush Green seat a month later, however, it saw its vote

tumble by almost 10%. The five remaining rebels soon quit UKIP and went on to form their own group on the council, “The Coastal Independents”.

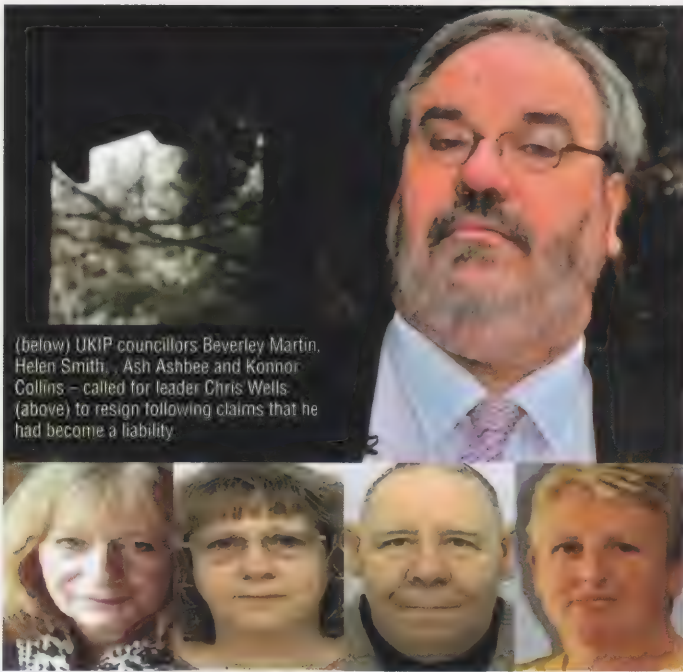
Further south in Basildon, UKIP is again in meltdown with three of their elected councillors, Alan Ball, David Harrison and Peter Holliman, breaking away from the main UKIP group to form their own “Wickford UKIP” group after a fallout over local issues.

Staying in Essex, A UKIP councillor, again only elected in May, has quit the party following a blazing row with his fellow UKIP councillors. Colin Churchman, who represents Stanford East and Corringham Town, complained that UKIP in Thurrock was attempting to put pressure on him on how he voted on the local planning committee.

Another UKIP councillor, Brian Wood quit the party just a week after being elected in Castle Point, again after falling out with the local leadership.

The bad news is not restricted to Essex. Heading west towards the capital, the story is much the same with another UKIP councillor Philip Hyde quitting the party in Havering after disagreements with his local comrades.





(below) UKIP councillors Beverley Martin, Helen Smith, Ash Ashbee and Konnor Collins – called for leader Chris Wells (above) to resign following claims that he had become a liability.

In Norfolk, meanwhile, UKIP has been forced to expel one of its councillors after he pleaded guilty to electoral fraud. Matthew Smith, who was also a former Great Yarmouth UKIP parliamentary candidate, was sentenced to 200 hours community service at Norwich Crown Court and was disqualified from public service for five years after admitting to obtaining false signatures on nomination papers.

The court heard that seven out of the eight candidate nomination forms submitted by Smith on behalf of UKIP contained forged signatures.

The by-election sparked by the guilty verdict saw UKIP take a beating at the ballot box, with its vote plummeting down 23% and its candidate being pushed back into distant third place.

Norfolk is not the only region where UKIP have taken a spanking in by-elections. UKIP seems to do very well when it stands for the first time in an area, yet its vote tumbles time and again when it makes a re-appearance.

When Cornish UKIP councillor Harry Blakeley resigned as a councillor due to ill health, the by-election that followed in the Camborne Pendarves ward saw UKIP's vote collapse to

a humiliating 8%, a full 23% down on its previous 2013 winning amount, which saw UKIP pushed back to 4th place.

Other recent by elections that saw the UKIP vote collapse include:

- The Barnsley Dearne North by-election held in August that saw the UKIP vote fall 12%
- Holmwood in The Mole Valley which witnessed the UKIP vote fall a massive 19.1%
- The Newton ward in Sandwell where UKIP lost 14.2% of its previous vote
- St Helens in Hastings and Old Hastings & Tressell in East Sussex that saw the UKIP vote fall 13.9% and 12.2% respectively.
- Finally, Wisbech South on Cambridgeshire County council saw UKIP lose almost 20% of its vote, despite being the incumbent party.

Financially, things do not look any brighter for UKIP with the party being forced to move out of its swanky Mayfair HQ due to financial problems. Some sources claim the party is in the red to the tune of £500,000 and that contractors have gone unpaid together with some staff members still waiting for their wages.

# SIGNS OF HATE 2.0

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publication

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# Don't Let Them Drown

**Owen Jones and Tom Godwin explain how HOPE not hate is taking the case for protecting migrants to campuses around the country**

LAST YEAR, 3,000 people drowned trying to reach Europe from across the Mediterranean: men, women and children fleeing war and persecution from countries like Syria, Iraq and Eritrea. Some who made the same journey are now seeking asylum in the UK.

In 2013, a shipwreck off the coast of Lampedusa in Italy led to an international outcry. More than 360 people drowned, and European countries came together to set up a search and rescue operation called Mare Nostrum. In just 12 months, the operation saved 100,000 people. By the end of 2014, however, funding for this operation had come to an end.

With anti-immigrant rhetoric rising across Europe, however, it was replaced with a stripped down border security operation that focused on securing borders and ended "search and rescue" operations.

UK Foreign Minister, Lady Anelay, gave the reasoning behind this at the time. Mare Nostrum was considered to have caused what she termed "a pull factor". It was further suggested that if we stopped saving people at sea, fewer would attempt the journey. Drown an immigrant to save an immigrant went the line.

Respected human rights groups such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Refugee Council roundly condemned this move.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) made its position very clear: It is war and persecution that drive people to cross the seas. Indeed, it is the lack of any clear and safe alternative route that forces people to risk everything to reach Europe. The UNHCR made another very stark warning: if we stop saving people, they will not stop coming. If we stop saving people, more people will die!

In June 2015, the EU agreed to relocate 40,000 refugees between

different member states but here is no mandatory quota for member states, and the UK has said it will not participate.

To put this number into context, there are 500 million people in the EU and 4 million refugees from Syria alone. The UK has so far rejected participation. Constrained by rampant anti-migrant populism, the government opted out of the scheme, taking advantage of one of its exemptions as agreed in the Lisbon Treaty.

Things have now gone from very bad to extremely worse. There has been an unprecedented number of deaths in the Mediterranean since Mare Nostrum ended. While a different rescue operation has been set up, it is far less expansive in its scope. On top of this, we have seen this crisis unfold right on to our doorstep in Calais with thousands of desperate people living in dire conditions and substantial numbers of these willing to risk their lives each day in an attempt to cross the channel to the UK.

Yet, here in the UK, far from trying to empathise with fellow human beings simply trying to seek a safe life for themselves and their families and come up with sensible policy and solutions to alleviate the problem, the right-wing media and politicians have described people in the camps as an "invasion", with the Prime Minister labelling them a "swarm" and "commentator" Katie Hopkins going as far as branding migrants as "feral" and "cockroaches". UKIP's leader, Nigel Farage, meanwhile, has gone so far to urge the government to deploy the armed forces to deal with the issue.

Progressive and sensible opinion is being drowned out and it is high time that a grassroots campaign was launched to mobilise all those that oppose the horrible rhetoric that is currently rife around the issue migration.



Cardiff students take part in a 'Don't Let Them Drown' protest last year

Last year, HOPE not hate launched the Don't Let Them Drown campaign, which called on the government to reverse its decision to withdraw support for rescue missions of migrants in the Mediterranean.

Initially an online campaign to lobby the government, a group of students from Cardiff University took it one stage further and headed to the streets to tell local politicians what they thought of the new proposals.

"Our first demonstration for the 'Don't Let Them Drown Campaign' was really successful, very creative and a lot of fun. Seeing students from a number of different Colleges and Universities come together to tackle one issue was very inspiring," said Cardiff University HOPE not hate Society president, Tess Eeles.

Inspired by this, this year's HOPE not hate student campaign will be talking the issue head-



If you are interested in getting involved with any of this, please contact [owen@hopenothate.org.uk](mailto:owen@hopenothate.org.uk)



on across the country with a series of local campaigns, led by students, but embracing the wider community, to show politicians that many, many, people oppose the current anti-migrant proposals and want our government to help those in need, not ignore them or turn them away.

The campaign will be a three-stage process intended to build up support and activist capacity carefully.

The proposed programme is as follows

### ■ Stage One – Motion at the student council

Aim: To get the Students' Union to affiliate to the campaign.

Student Councils are often great places to present a campaign to those most active on campus. With the migration crisis being hotly debated at Westminster and the European Parliament, it is vital local HOPE not hate moves quickly

on the issue and this is a good audience to try to get on board quickly to open doors and provide much needed resources.

### ■ Stage Two – Petition MEPs

Aim: Launch a petition on campus to lobby local MEPs to vote for the UNHCR recommendations to reaffirm the EU's commitment to safeguard the rights of refugees and other persons in need of international protection to which they are entitled.

This crisis does not just affect the UK, it is happening all over Europe and action needs to be taken at an international level.



**A** To raise awareness of the 3000 men, women and children that died this year alone seeking safety in Europe.

**B** To inform our fellow students that our government has removed funding from rescue operations on the Mediterranean.

The flash mob will take place on Monday 1st December.



The recent decision to withdraw funding from European efforts to rescue sinking boats in the Mediterranean flies in the face of decency and compassion. With few opportunities to enter Europe through regular means, thousands of people threatened by persecution are risking everything in dangerous sea voyages. To believe that allowing more people to die will discourage immigration into Europe is clearly unproven and will only lead to more tragic deaths of desperate people. We must not let innocent people drown.

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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT has recently announced that it is withdrawing its funding for rescue boats in the Mediterranean in the hope that the increased risk of death will deter migrants from making the journey to Europe. And what is worse is that our local MP supports this move. To believe that this measure will discourage immigration into Europe is clearly nonsense and will only lead to more tragic deaths of desperate people. Sadly, this decision gives more to domestic political pressure in a bid to head off the threat from UKIP and all such is no way to develop a coherent and genuine immigration policy. People migrate because of war, persecution and poverty. Addressing these issues is what is required. We understand and appreciate that people have concerns about immigration but a policy of witholding people to die in a desert is morally wrong and inhumane. **SHAME ON OUR MP FOR SUPPORTING THIS POSITION.**

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MEPs are also often the forgotten politicians and handing them a large petition is likely have much more resonance than to their Westminster counterparts. Also, with the European constituencies being so large, it allows groups to work together and hopefully some of the larger unions can assist the smaller ones.

### ■ Stage three – Engage the local community

Aim: Take the message from campus to the wider community.

At HOPE not hate we are very grateful to all our student activists and we have been delighted with the amount of support we receive on campuses throughout the UK. However, we need to engage the wider public. The more people we can get involved in a local area, the more politicians will sit up and listen. We also hope that this will be the start of some powerful relationships between our student supporters and other social justice campaigns.

This issue affects all of us and we are well aware that HOPE not hate supporters' outside of colleges and universities will be wanting to get involved. This is why we will also be holding a number of "Don't Let Them Drown" discussions across the country and starting the debate on what we can actually do.



# Refugees are our football family

Mark Perryman the football fans' response to the Refugee Crisis

THE FIRST Spanish player in the English league? A Basque refugee from the Spanish Civil War. Scorer of Blackpool's fourth and final goal in the "Matthews Cup Final"? A refugee from racist South Africa. Sometimes pub quiz questions have a knack of revealing hidden histories to explain not only the past but also the present.

Football has been the most universal sport for more than a century or more. From the legend that was Ferenc Puskás to one of today's most recognisable players Zlatan Ibrahimović, refugees have always been part of our football family. The Swiss squad that went to World Cup 2014 included no less than seven players who were refugees from conflicts in the Balkans.

As the late summer refugee

crisis erupted onto our TV screens, Bundesliga fans filled German stadia with homemade "REFUGEES WILKOMMEN" banners. How might fans in England, the home of teams whose playing line-ups have been globalised more than any other, react too?

Guardian columnist Marina Hyde has pointed out, the refugee crisis is a time when it could, should, acquire some much-needed meaning.

"If such a thing can ever be said to exist," she wrote, "then this issue gripping Europe should be among the very closest to its heart." And so an initiative, "Refugees are our football family", has been launched by Philosophy Football, backed by HOPE not Hate, the Football Supporters' Federation, the Football Action Network, Football Against Racism in Europe,

Football Beyond Borders, Kick it Out and the fanzine When Saturday Comes.

Philosophy Football design guru Hugh Tisdale has produced the campaign's fundraising T-shirt. Hugh explained: "The united club colours symbolise football as us, not me, that's the game at its best a community of localities and nations all together." All profits from sales go to Doctors of the World who staff the only medical clinic operating in the Calais refugee camp along with other clinics in refugee camps across the Middle East, North Africa and Europe.

Our ambition is to raise a lot of money going directly to where the help is needed most, backed by hundreds,

thousands, of fans wearing the message that ours is a football culture that is open, welcoming and with a human generosity of spirit.

Raising funds will be the principle focus accompanied by a symbolic solidarity. As winter approaches conditions in the camps will worsen. Fans from every club across Britain and beyond are being asked to send in old club scarves. Woollens are on the list of goods the refugee charities most need and we can help out with our old scarves being taken to the camp by a Wembley to Calais convoy. From one home of football, a powerful symbol of the kind of humanitarian hospitality all fans can be proud of.

■ Refugees are Our Football Family T-shirt is available from [www.philosophyfootball.com](http://www.philosophyfootball.com)

■ Send clean, good condition club scarves before Friday 9 October to Philosophy Football PO Box 11140, Harwich CO12 9AP. Please include your name, address and email in legible writing.





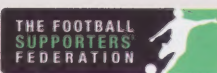
# FROM PUSKAS TO IBRAHIMOVIC



The first Spaniard to play in the English league? A refugee from the Spanish Civil War. Scorer of Blackpool's fourth goal in the 'Matthews Final'? A refugee from the racist South African regime. From Puskas to Ibrahimović, refugees have always been part of the football family. All profits will help fund the Doctors of the World UK unit, the only medical aid operating in the Calais Refugee camp, as well as in others across North Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

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